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# A PLEA FOR POLYGAMY

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this edition have been printed, all
of which, except ten copies for the
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This is Number

578

A PLEA
for
POLYGAMY
Renata

# A PLEA FOR POLYGAMY

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GEORGE E. MAYCOCK

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# PREFACE

BECAUSE this is one of the most curious books ever published in the United States and because it is written with a transparent sincerity so rare among writers on this subject, The Panurge Press has decided to present it again to American readers.

Sixty years ago this work made its first appearance in Boston under the title, "The History and Philosophy of Marriage; or, Polygamy and Monogamy Compared." For judicious reasons the author preferred to remain anonymous.

On the title-page appeared this all-embracing quotation from an old English play:

"There shall be no widows in the land,
For I will marry them all;
There shall be no orphans,
For I will father them all."

Thirty years ago Charles Carrington, the publisher, reprinted this strange book in Paris in an edition limited to 300 copies under the title, "A Plea for Polygamy." He added an interesting and valuable appendix which we have retained in this edition.

As both these editions have now become exceedingly scarce we believe that there exists a genuine demand in this country for a new edition.

THE PANURGE PRESS

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# Chapter I
# INTRODUCTORY

# I. INTRODUCTORY

## *Audi Alteram Partem*

PHILOSOPHY takes nothing for granted. It doubts all things that it may prove all things. The marriage question is a proper subject of philosophical inquiry, involving an examination and analysis of both polygamy and monogamy. Of the latter form of marriage the Christian world has known too much, and of the former too little, to have felt, hitherto, the need of any analysis of either. We have inherited our monogamy, or the marriage system which restricts each man to one wife only, and have practised it as a matter of course, without any special examination or inquiry: so that we really know but little concerning its origin or its early history, while we know less of the system of polygamy. We read something of it in the Bible and in the history of Eastern nations, and we learn something more from the reports of modern travelers; and it cannot be denied that what we know of

it has come to us in such a form as to prejudice our minds against it. This prejudice is unfavorable to a just and candid philosophical inquiry; and while pursuing this inquiry, let us hold this prejudice in abeyance. Let us not forget that what we have seen of this system is in its most unfavorable aspects. Most travelers carry their native prejudices abroad, and look upon the customs of distant countries with less astonishment than contempt. And they remember, when writing up their accounts of those countries, that their books are made to be sold at home; and they must not institute comparisons unfavorable to their own land, but must flatter the conceit of their fellow-countrymen by assuring them that their own social and political institutions are vastly better than those of other lands. So, also, with history: it presents human affairs in a perspective view, painting its roughest mountains with distinct exactness, but casting its peaceful plains quite into the shade. It devotes a hundred pages to the details of wars and intrigues, illustrating the crimes of men, in proportion to a single page of descriptions of common life and domestic tranquillity, illustrating their virtues.

If the writer, on the contrary, shall seem prejudiced in favor of polygamy, let it be attributed to his love of fair-play, and his desire to let both sides be heard, rather than to any undue bias of mind preventing him from doing equal justice to the arguments in favor of either system.

It is attested and proved by competent authority, which no one doubts, that polygamy, or that social system which permits a plurality of wives, has always prevailed in most countries and in all ages of the world, from time immemorial; but this form of marriage, being foreign to the customs of modern Europe and of America, is very naturally regarded throughout these enlightened regions as sometimes heathenish and barbarous.

Modern writers, whose works are the exponents of European civilization, have hitherto said everything against it, and nothing for it. But they have condemned it almost without examination or debate, rather because it is strange than because they have proved it to be at fault. No one has given to the subject the time and research necessary to its fair elucidation. But, as a venerable institution, the social system of polygamy does not deserve such supercilious treatment. Such treatment, besides being unjust, is unphilosophical, and unworthy a liberal and an enlightened age. Its great antiquity alone should entitle it to sufficient respect to be heard, at least, in its own defence. It constitutes an important part of human history. It is a great fact that cannot be ignored; and as such, it must be studied and known. To insist upon the condemnation of this system, without hearing its defence, is oppression. It is even the worst kind of oppression; for, in such case, it must be allied with ignorance and bigotry. But if there ever was a

time when polygamy could properly be thrust aside with a sneer, and it was satisfactory to Christian justice to condemn it unheard and unexamined, it can be so no longer; for, with the general diffusion of knowledge and the increased facilities of modern intercourse, our speculative inquiries are seeking a range of cosmopolitan extent, and we are brought into daily contact with the opinions and the practices of the antipodes. If we disapprove of their practices, we should be prepared to make substantial objections to them; and if we wish to teach them our own, we should be able to give equally substantial reasons. If the advocates of polygamy are in the minority in the Christian world, let the common rights of the minority be granted them—freedom of debate and the privilege of protest; and let their solemn protest be listened to with respect, and be spread upon the current records of the day. And, on the other hand, if those who practise this ancient system do constitute the majority of mankind, it cannot be either uninteresting or unimportant to inquire what has made it so nearly universal, and caused it to be adopted by so many different nations, and even different races of men, among whom are, no doubt, some persons who are justly distinguished for their wisdom, their piety, and their humanity.

The writer is not aware that any former attempt has been made in this country to analyze and explain the social system of polygamy, or that any

works written abroad for this purpose have ever been current here; at least, he has not been able to obtain any, and thus to avail himself of their assistance. While, therefore, the subject-matter of this essay is of the most venerable antiquity, the manner of its discussion must be entirely new; and not only can the author claim the singular merit of originality, but the reader can be assured of the no less singular zest of novelty.

## *Some Account of the Author*

Almost everybody who takes up a new book is curious to know something of the writer; of his special qualifications for his work, of his opportunities of acquiring a thorough knowledge of his subject, and of the standpoint from which he views it. He will, therefore, proceed at once to give some account of himself, and how he came to write this work. And the courteous reader will now please permit him to drop the indirect style of address so common among writers, and to introduce himself by speaking in the first person. I am a native of New England, and was brought up a strict Puritan. My father always declared his intention to educate me for the law, and I took to learning as readily as most boys of my age. I was graduated from college almost forty years ago, and had nearly completed my professional studies, when my health suddenly broke down; and I then

discovered that I had been bestowing all my care upon the improvement of the mind, to the total neglect of the healthfulness of the body. And this, I fancy, was only a common defect at that time in our American, or, at least our New England, system of education. The physicians having prescribed a voyage at sea and a residence of some months in a tropical climate, the influence of my friends obtained a foreign situation for me in one of our Boston houses having an extensive business in India; and I became their clerk, and afterwards their factor. The engagements then entered into could not easily be broken off, and I have continued in them many years; and, having seen all the continents of the globe, and many islands of the sea, and having observed human society in every climate and in every social condition, I have at length returned to my native land, an older, and, I hope, a wiser man. Having become an active member of the church in my youth, I did not renounce my Christian character abroad, but have always afforded such encouragement and assistance as I was able to our American and English missionaries, whenever I fell in with them. In fact, I had long cherished a profound respect and admiration for the missionary enterprise; and, notwithstanding my father's wish to educate me for the law, I had, during my course of study, seriously offered myself as a candidate for missionary labor; and, had I been deemed worthy of that

honor, I should, no doubt, have devoted my life to that service. But Providence did not so order it. Yet when I went abroad, my early predilections easily reconciled me to the pain of leaving my native land, to the disappointment which I experienced in renouncing a career of professional and literary honors, and readily introduced me to the society of those devoted missionaries whom I would fain have chosen for my fellow-laborers and life-companions. I was very much surprised, however, soon after my first acquaintance with them, to learn that, under certain circumstances, they allowed the members of the native Christian churches a plurality of wives. As I had been educated a strict monogamist, in New England, I had never once dreamed that any other social system than monogamy could be possible among Christian people, anywhere; and I remonstrated with the missionaries for permitting polygamy among their converts, under any circumstances whatever.

## *Missionaries and Polygamy*

I was answered by them that the Bible has not forbidden it, but, on the contrary, has recognized it, as sometimes lawful and proper; and, although they themselves did not encourage it, they could not positively prohibit it. I then endeavored to recollect some prohibition in the Bible, but could neither recollect nor find one there. On the con-

trary, to my own astonishment, after a careful examination of the Sacred Scriptures, I did find therein many things to favor it. The missionaries also said that their experience had taught them that the converting grace of God was granted to those living in polygamy as often as to others; the natives themselves attach no moral reproach to it; "and," said the missionaries, "if such persons give evidence of genuine conversion, 'Can any man forbid water, that they should not be baptized, who have received the grace of God as well as we?' Besides," they added, "if they are not received and recognized as Christians, how shall we dispose of them? Shall we refuse them our fellowship, and send them back again to their idolatry? This would be no less unchristian than unkind. Shall we compel them to put away all their wives, but those first married, and then receive them into the church? But in many cases this would be impracticable, in others unjust, in all cruel. For the chastity of the women hitherto irreproachable would be tarnished by their repudiation: they would often be left without a home and without support; and, like other disgraced and destitute women of all lands, they would be thrust into a life of infamy and vice. Who," continued they, "shall dare assume the responsibility of separating wife from husband, and children from parents? since the Bible expressly forbids a man to divorce his wife, for any cause, except unfaithfulness to her mar-

riage vow: God is not said in the Bible to hate polygamy, but it says there that *'he hateth putting away.'* "

I need not say that I was completely disarmed and silenced by this array of "the law and the testimony;" and was compelled, by their arguments, to admit that their course was one of equal justice and mercy. I soon learned, however, that the rules of the missionaries are by no means uniform upon this question. Many of them, particularly those who possess a great regard for the authority and the dogmas of the church, and who reason rather from the "tradition of the elders," than from the laws of Nature or of God, have rigidly enforced monogamy among their converts; and if anyone becomes a Christian while living in polygamy, such missionaries require him to repudiate all his wives but one. It was not many months after the conversation above related that one of the missionaries called my attention to a religious journal that he had just received from Boston, containing the report of certain missionaries among the North American Indians, giving an account of the conversion of an old and influential chief.

## *The Indian Chief and His Wives*

This chief at the time of his conversion to Christianity was living with two wives. The one first married was now aged, blind, and childless. The

other was young, attractive, healthful, and the mother of one fine boy. One of these wives the missionaries required him to put away, as an indispensable requisite to baptism and church-membership. The old chief, after careful deliberation, could not decide which one to repudiate. The first he was bound by every honorable motive "to love and to cherish," especially on account of her age and infirmity; while the other was devotedly attached to him, and was the mother of his only child and heir, which he could not give up, and from which he could not separate the mother. He, therefore, submitted the case to the missionaries to decide which one of them he should put away. They decided against the younger one. And as he was old himself and his other wife was barren, that she must also give up her child. This mandate was obeyed with martyr-like fortitude, which nothing but the strongest religious motives could have inspired; opposed, as it was, to every natural sentiment of love and honor. And thus, in one hour, was that young wife and mother deprived of her husband, her child, her character, and her home; and sent away a bereaved and lonely outcast into the wide world. The report which the missionaries themselves gave of this affair closed by saying that the repudiated wife and bereaved mother soon died inconsolable and broken-hearted.

## *The Author Changes His Mind*

On reading this report, I could not forbear contrasting their mode of treating polygamy with that of the missionaries in the East, which had come under my own observation there, and which I had, at first, so severely criticized. I now began to blush at my own late ignorance and bigotry. And the more I thought of the ecclesiastical tyranny of the North American missionaries, the higher rose my indignation against it. I could not fail to see that their narrow attachment to their own social system had made them judicially blind to the merits of any other; and that they were more ignorant of the true spirit of Christianity as well as of the natural rights of man concerning the laws of marriage, than even the poor savages themselves. Yet they undoubtedly supposed they were doing God essential service by this act of inhumanity; just as our fathers did when they hanged and burned honest men because they worshipped God in a different manner, and entertained different views of divine truth, than themselves. Their mistake is one which has always been too common, and from which no one, perhaps, is altogether free. It consists in assuming that, because we are honest in our belief, and mean to be right, others who essentially differ from us are dishonest and wrong; and in presuming to judge the conduct of others by what we *feel to be right*, i.e., by our own standard of

morality, instead of judging them by what we *know to be right*, according to the infallible standard of divine truth.

These reflections led me to give the whole subject of marriage, in respect to its divine and natural laws, as thorough and as critical an investigation as my abilities and advantages enabled me to do; and to inquire into the origin and the moral tendencies of the two social systems of monogamy and polygamy.

I have now pursued this investigation many years, and have become convinced that polygamy is not always an immorality; that sometimes a man may innocently have more than one woman; and then that it is their right to be married to him, and his duty to love and cherish them for better or for worse, for richer or for poorer, in sickness and in health, till death shall part them.

## *His Purpose and Challenge*

I am unwilling to leave the world without having given it the benefit of these reflections. All truth is important. If these views are true, they ought to be known; if they are not true let them be refuted. If the prejudices of modern Christians are opposed to the social system which their ancient brethren, the earliest saints and patriarchs, practised in the good old days of Bible truth and pastoral simplicity, I believe that these prejudices

are neither natural nor inveterate; but that they have been induced by the corrupted Christianity of the mediæval priesthood, and that they will be removed when Christian people become better informed; and if it be necessary for me to sacrifice my own ease and my own credit, in attempting to remove them, I shall only suffer the common lot of all reformers before me. Yet I scarcely expect to see any immediate results of my labors. It is a melancholy and a humiliating fact that the opinions of most people are determined more by what others around them think and say than by what they believe themselves. They are not accustomed to the proper exercise of their own reason, and do not follow the convictions of their own minds. Yet there are some who dare to think and act for themselves; and into the hands of a few such I doubt not these pages will fall; and to all such I most heartily commend them. Thus I make no further apology for calling the attention of an intelligent age to a new examination of an old institution. Truth dreads no scrutiny; shields herself behind no breastwork of established custom or of respectable authority, but proudly stands upon her own merits. I will not despair, therefore, in gaining the attention of every lover of the truth while I attempt to develop and demonstrate the laws of God and of Nature upon the important subject of marriage, and to apply those laws to the two systems of monogamy and polygamy.

## *Frankness on Marriage Necessary*

To prevent misconception of the meaning intended to be conveyed by these terms, it is proper to state that, by the laws of God, I mean the written laws contained in the Holy Bible; which I believe to be the most perfect revelation of the divine will and God's inestimable gift to man. The laws by which the universe subsists, embracing those of mind as well as those of matter, are undoubtedly the laws of God also; but we call them, by way of distinction, the laws of Nature; because it is only by diligent study of nature, and by a reasoning from cause to effect and from effect to cause, that they can be determined, yet when determined they are always found to harmonize with each other and also with the written law, which they may safely and properly be employed to illustrate and explain.

Both these classes of law differ materially from the civil law, or the laws of States and nations; especially in these respects: the former are always harmonious with each other, and equally valid at all times and places, and are, therefore, infallible and unchangeable. The latter are always conflicting with and often contradictory to one another; and are constantly being altered, amended, and repealed; and, although founded upon truth, in general, and intended for the public good, and therefore entitled to our respect and obedience,

they are so only in a qualified sense, far inferior to that profound respect and implicit obedience due to divine and natural law.

In my analysis of the laws of marriage on which depends the mutual relation of the two sexes, I shall be obliged to speak of that relation with unusual familiarity; even though I may sometimes offend our modern notions of modesty and propriety—notions which I shall not now stop to discuss, whether they be true or false; it matters not. Truth rises superior to every consideration of fastidiousness, and it is high time that these truths should be demonstrated. Yet it shall be my care so to treat them as not to offend true modesty unnecessarily: *puris omnia pura.*

# Chapter II

# PRIMARY LAWS OF MARRIAGE

# II. PRIMARY LAWS OF MARRIAGE

## *Marriage Defined*

SINCE the infallible and unchangeable laws of God and of Nature have limited the indulgence of love to married persons only, it becomes necessary to inquire into the laws and limitations of marriage itself. What is marriage? and who are entitled to its right and benefits?

The proper definition of marriage is the main point at issue between the social system of polygamy and that of monogamy, which it is the object of this treatise to examine and compare. One system defines marriage to be the exclusive union of one man with one woman until separated by death or divorce; the other defines it to be the union of one man with either one woman or more, until separated by death or divorce.

It now remains for us to determine which of these definitions is most in harmony with the laws of God and of Nature. And we shall be better able

to do this, by considering carefully the beneficent purposes which marriage is designed to subserve.

## *The Benefits of Marriage*

Marriage is the first and best of all human institutions, if it can properly be called human, since it was first solemnized in Paradise, by the Creator himself, who then said, "It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helpmeet for him." And he made a woman, and brought her unto the man. "And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it."

It is impossible to enumerate all the benefits of marriage, since there is no vital interest of mankind which it does not affect favorably. Marriage perpetuates the human race; lays the foundations of organized society; promotes industry; accumulates wealth; cultivates the arts, and maintains religion. It builds the house, tills the soil, supports the family, and fosters every charitable and benevolent enterprise.

As the word of God has declared marriage to be honorable in all, so we must infer that his laws have made provision for the honorable marriage of all; and that every person of each sex is equally entitled to its rights and benefits. These rights should no more be restricted to the rich and the fortunate than are the susceptibilities of love, upon

which marriage properly depends, and from which it derives its only proper warrant and authority.

## *Love Before Marriage*

Marriage, when authorized and warranted by the promptings of an honest love, is a pure and blissful consummation of all that is divine in humanity; but when it is contracted from mercenary or ambitious motives, it becomes a most unholy profanation. Love was not made for marriage, but marriage for love. Love is an inherent and a necessary attribute of humanity; marriage a subsequent relationship instituted to minister to love's wants. Love is the mistress, marriage the handmaid. Marriage must wait the demands of love, and not love the demands of marriage. It is, therefore, equally disrespectful to our Creator, and dishonorable to man, to require that love should be suppressed because marriage is inconvenient, and still more dishonorable and disrespectful to require anyone to be deprived of the rights of love on account of the impossibility of marriage; for marriage ought to be possible to all. If love be refining and ennobling, if it be the spontaneous, instinctive birthright of all, and if our Creator has restricted its indulgence to the marriage relation, then marriage must be the right of all, or else God is not a benevolent being. But all nature and all revelation have demonstrated that he is a benevo-

lent being, and it is both impious and absurd to believe that his laws have made no adequate provision for everyone to be married who wishes to be. We may waive our rights, and live in celibacy, if we prefer to; but no one who *loves* and who wishes to marry ought to be compelled to remain unmarried. It is, therefore, demonstrated that any form of society which fails to provide for the marriage of all is a defective system, and opposed to the natural, inherent, and inalienable rights of man.

## *Marital Rights Denied to Many*

Yet we well know that there are very many persons, especially many women, who are neither married nor have any opportunity to marry. By some means they have been deprived of their rights. The fault is not theirs; they would, in almost every instance, prefer wedded life, if it were in their power to attain it; but it is not. They possess the same susceptibilities of love, the same yearning for intimate companionship, that others do, but these tender sensibilities they are obliged to repress. The fault is not in Nature, nor in the laws of God, but it is in the tyrannical laws and fashions of the artificial system of social life which now obtains among us. This system must be at fault, for it does not, and it cannot, provide for the marriage of all; and many who desire to marry are forever de-

prived of husbands and homes: while the system of polygamy does provide for all, and is, therefore, the only system which is in harmony with divine and natural laws.

This proposition is further demonstrated by the simple fact that the number of marriageable women always exceeds the number of marriageable men.

## *More Women Than Men*

The statistics of all States and nations agree in this fact,* except, occasionally, in those States in

* "The censuses heretofore taken of more than one hundred millions of the population of Europe exhibit the remarkable fact, that in those countries, during the first fifteen years of life, the males uniformly exceed the females in number, but that, subsequently to this age, the females become more numerous, and increasingly so with increase of age. The same is true with regard to the proportionate numbers of the sexes in Massachusetts and the other New England States.

"During the ten years 1856—65, the total number of births registered in Massachusetts was 334,493, of which 171,584, or 51.29 per cent, were males; 161,715, or 48.35 per cent, were females; and of 1,194, or ½ of one per cent, the sex was not stated. During the first ten years of life, the deaths of males exceeded those of females in a ratio beyond that of the relative number of the sexes at birth.

"In 1855, there were 32,301 more females than males in Massachusetts; in 1860, 37,640 more females; and the excess of females in 1865 was 63,011."—*Census of Massachusetts for* 1865, pp. 286, 287.

"Ever since the first census of 1765, there has been found an excess of females over males in Massachusetts; the disparity has increased somewhat rapidly since 1850."—*Massachusetts Registration Report of Births, Marriages, and*

which the population is very largely made up by foreign immigration. Most of these immigrants are men; and many of them have left their wives and families in the mother-country, and do not intend to become permanent citizens, but hope to make their fortunes and return home to enjoy them. Yet many persons who have never examined statistical tables, nor taken any other accurate means of informing themselves, suppose the number of the men to be equal to that of the women; and it has been a plausible objection to polygamy that, if some men have a plurality of wives, some other men must thereby be deprived of any, and the system must be unequal and unjust. The objection would be valid were it based upon valid facts: but it is all an error; and it is one which a little observation would enable almost anyone readily to correct. One has only to count up the persons of each sex of marriageable age in all the families of his own acquaintance to satisfy himself that the females will outnumber the males. It is true, that, at birth, the number of each sex is nearly equal; that of the males being slightly in excess, but a much larger proportion of the males die in childhood, than of the females.* Generally, about fifty

*Deaths for* 1866. *O. Warner, Secretary of Commonwealth, Boston,* 1867.

* In Massachusetts, the percentage of the deaths of male children under one year of age during the year 1866 was 22.25, that of female children during the same year was 17.42. See *Massachusetts Registration Report for* 1866, p. 44.

per cent of all male children die before the age of twenty-one years; while only about thirty-three per cent, or two-thirds as many females, die during the same period.* And then, as they grow up to manhood, the boys and young men are constantly exposed to hardships and dangers, from which the softer sex is exempt; and hence the excess of the females goes on continually increasing as we see by the statistical tables, from the beginning to the end of the marriageable age. All this in times of peace: the excess must be much greater than usual after a destructive war; for during the late civil war in America there were lost from both parties

*STATISTICAL TABLES.

POPULATION OF MASSACHUSETTS, 1st JUNE, 1860.

| | *Male.* | *Female.* |
|---|---|---|
| Under 1 year | 15,869 | 15,666 |
| 1 and under 5 | 60,059 | 59,695 |
| 5 " 10 | 64,476 | 64,050 |
| 10 " 15 | 57,544 | 56,804 |
| 15 " 20 | 57,070 | 63,730 |
| 20 " 30 | 112,413 | 132,106 |
| Total (under 30 years only) | 367,431 | 392,051 |

WHITE POPULATION OF SUFFOLK CO. (CITY OF BOSTON), MASSACHUSETTS, 1860.

| | *Male.* | *Female.* |
|---|---|---|
| Under 1 year | 2,707 | 2,743 |
| 1 and under 5 | 9,358 | 9,334 |
| 5 " 10 | 9,730 | 9,945 |
| 10 " 15 | 8,224 | 8,313 |
| 15 " 20 | 19,865 | 23,906 |
| Total (under 30 years only) | 49,884 | 54,241 |

nearly a million of men in the most productive period of life.

## *Women Mature Earlier Than Men*

Young women become marriageable at a much earlier age than young men do. There is a natural or constitutional difference of several years, and prudential considerations cause the difference to become practically greater. But few young men are born to large fortunes, which these times of extravagance require for the fashionable maintenance of a family; and those who are rich are not always the most prompt to marry. They prefer to spend their early manhood in dissipation, and are

Colored Population of New York City, 1860.

| | *Male.* | *Female.* |
|---|---|---|
| Under 1 year | 82 | 174 |
| 1 and under 5 | 410 | 453 |
| 5 " 10 | 566 | 574 |
| 10 " 15 | 565 | 531 |
| 15 " 20 | 446 | 618 |
| 20 " 30 | 1,120 | 1,655 |
| Total (under 30 years only) | 3,189 | 3,905 |

Population of Pennsylvania, 1860.

| | *Male.* | *Female.* |
|---|---|---|
| Under 1 year | 44,167 | 42,704 |
| 1 and under 5 | 179,253 | 176,145 |
| 5 " 10 | 194,258 | 191,094 |
| 10 " 15 | 171,162 | 167,025 |
| 15 " 20 | 149,531 | 160,357 |
| 20 " 30 | 246,343 | 263,931 |
| Total (under 30 years only) | 985,714 | 1,001,256 |

unwilling to bow to the yoke of wedlock till they begin to feel the infirmities of age; while the poor man must devote several years of his majority to toil before he becomes able to assume matrimonial expenses. The result is that most men do not marry until between twenty-five and thirty-five years of age, and many at a later period; while a large majority of women who marry at all are married between the ages of fifteen and twenty-five. On the whole, therefore, women are practically marriageable ten years younger than men are, a period which constitutes a third part of the average duration of adult life. From these two causes alone,—the greater number of women, and their being marriageable so much younger,—the propor-

POPULATION OF NEW YORK STATE, 1860.

| | *Male.* | *Female.* |
|---|---|---|
| Under 1 year | 52,175 | 51,257 |
| 1 and under 5 | 216,112 | 210,591 |
| 5 " 10 | 232,426 | 227,413 |
| 10 " 15 | 203,453 | 197,884 |
| 15 " 20 | 188,893 | 205,604 |
| 20 " 30 | 341,067 | 386,141 |
| Total (under 30 years only) | 1,234,126 | 1,278,890 |

WHITE POPULATION OF NEW YORK CITY, 1860.

| | *Male.* | *Female.* |
|---|---|---|
| Under 1 year | 12,247 | 12,072 |
| 1 and under 5 | 47,074 | 46,025 |
| 5 " 10 | 46,380 | 45,452 |
| 10 " 15 | 36,233 | 34,936 |
| 15 " 20 | 33,344 | 39,628 |
| 20 " 30 | 77,747 | 97,627 |
| Total (under 30 years only) | 253,025 | 275,740 |

tion of marriageable women to marriageable men would be about two to one.

## *Many Men Refuse to Marry*

But the practical difference is still greater. For after men have arrived at adult manhood, and have acquired the means of supporting a family, many of them refuse marriage. Some have out-lived their youthful desires, and have acquired decided habits of celibacy; some are too gay and too profligate; others too busy and too selfish; others so

| White Population of Philadelphia Co., Penn., 1860. | *Male.* | *Female.* |
|---|---|---|
| Under 1 year | 7,829 | 7,475 |
| 1 and under 5 | 30,864 | 30,533 |
| 5 " 10 | 31,981 | 31,737 |
| 10 " 15 | 26,135 | 27,113 |
| 15 " 20 | 23,425 | 29,294 |
| 20 " 30 | 49,667 | 61,380 |
| Total (under 30 years only) | 169,901 | 187,532 |

| Colored Population of Philadelphia, 1860. | *Male.* | *Female.* |
|---|---|---|
| Under 1 year | 187 | 209 |
| 1 and under 5 | 809 | 1,065 |
| 5 " 10 | 1,019 | 1,195 |
| 10 " 15 | 996 | 1,199 |
| 15 " 20 | 915 | 1,552 |
| 20 " 30 | 1,875 | 2,864 |
| Total (under 30 years only) | 5,801 | 8,084 |

The first four statistics are compiled from the United States Census for 1860. The following are from the Census of Massachusetts for 1865, published under the supervision of O. Warner, Secretary of the Commonwealth. Table I, p. 2.

broken down by early dissipation and diseased by the contagious poison of low vice, that they are totally unfit to marry: while there are many others whose occupations (such as sailors and soldiers) most commonly prevent marriage. From these disabilities the other sex is much more exempt. They are exposed to fewer temptations; they are more susceptible to religious impressions; they are more immediately under the control of parents and guardians, and are saved from many of those enervating and degrading habits which beset young men, rendering them either disinclined to marriage, or unfit for it, or both.

## *Few Women Decline Marriage*

There are, on the other hand, few women who are unwilling to marry. They are naturally dependent upon their male friends; and, after the period of childhood, this dependence is seldom

POPULATION OF MASSACHUSETTS, 1ST JUNE, 1865.

| | *Male.* | *Female.* |
|---|---|---|
| Under 1 year | 1,974 | 1,745 |
| 1 and under 2 | 12,808 | 12,431 |
| 2 " 3 | 13,643 | 13,515 |
| 3 " 4 | 14,161 | 14,188 |
| 4 " 5 | 14,735 | 14,653 |
| 5 " 10 | 71,777 | 71,614 |
| 10 " 15 | 63,853 | 62,838 |
| 15 " 20 | 55,281 | 61,890 |
| 20 " 30 | 96,027 | 129,479 |
| Total (under 30 years only) | 344,259 | 382,353 |

happy or even tolerable, except in the marriage relation. The former is a dependence of necessity, the latter is, or ought to be, a dependence of love; and this distinction makes all the difference in the world. Hence it needs no argument to prove what is so universally admitted, that women fulfill their highest destiny in life only by becoming wives and mothers. I will cite a woman's testimony, and submit the case, quoting the earnest words of "GAIL HAMILTON." "There is not one woman in a million who would not be married if . . . she could have a chance. How do I know? Just as I know that the stars are now shining in the sky, though it is high noon. I never saw a star at noonday; but I know it is the nature of stars to shine in the sky, and of the sky to hold its stars. Genius or fool,

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POPULATION OF SUFFOLK CO., MASSACHUSETTS, (CITY OF BOSTON), 1ST JUNE, 1865.

| | *Male.* | *Female.* |
|---|---|---|
| Under 1 year | 2,145 | 2,017 |
| 1 and under 2 | 2,003 | 1,819 |
| 2 " 3 | 2,288 | 2,255 |
| 3 " 4 | 2,205 | 2,233 |
| 4 " 5 | 2,280 | 2,301 |
| 5 " 10 | 10,267 | 11,623 |
| 10 " 15 | 9,848 | 9,971 |
| 15 " 20 | 8,527 | 10,267 |
| 20 " 30 | 17,601 | 25,618 |
| Total (under 30 years only) | 57,164 | 68,104 |

In the above table the excess of females between the ages of 5 and 20 is 3,219, or about ⅛ of the number of males; between 20 and 30 it is 8,017, or about ½ of the number of males.

rich or poor, beauty or the beast, if marriage were what it should be, what God meant it to be, what even, with the world's present possibilities, it might be, it would be the Elysium, the sole, complete Elysium, of woman, yes, and of man. Greatness, glory, usefulness, happiness, await her otherwheres; but here alone all her powers, all her being, can find full play. No condition, no character even, can quite hide the gleam of the sacred fire; but on the household hearth it joins the warmth of earth to the hues of heaven. Brilliant, dazzling, vivid, a beacon and a blessing her light may be; but only a happy home blends the prismatic rays into a soft, serene whiteness, that floods the world with divine illumination. Without wifely and motherly love, a part of her nature must remain enclosed, a spring shut up, a fountain sealed."*

## *Monogamy Prevents Marriage*

But under the system of monogamy it is impossible for half the women to live in the enjoyment of the married state. This cruel and oppressive system is compelling them either to repress the fondest sensibilities and the most imperative demands of Nature, and to renounce their dearest rights, or else to assert them in a clandestine and

* New Atmosphere, p. 55.

forbidden manner, and thus to abandon themselves to a life of infamy and an eternity of shame and woe.

In older and more wealthy countries practising monogamy, the comparative number of unmarried to married women is even greater. The statistical tables of England show that less than one-third of the marriageable women of that country were living in marriage at the time of the last census.

At the period of the highest glory of the Roman empire, and also during its long decline, while wealth and luxury increased, and the artificial conventionalities of society were greatly multiplied, it was observed, with alarm, that marriages became less and less frequent, and were consummated later and later in life: and all the power of the government was exerted in vain to arrest the growing evil. Heavy fines and special taxes were levied upon old bachelors, and high premiums paid to persons having numerous families; but the evil continued to increase till the empire was dismembered.*

* "But neither rewards nor penalties proved effectual to check the increasing tendency to celibacy; and at the period of the Gracchi an alarm was sounded that the old Roman race was becoming rapidly extinguished. . . . When the legislation of Julius Cæsar was found ineffectual for controlling the still growing evil, it was re-enforced by his successor with fresh penalties and rewards."—*Merivale's Hist. of the Romans,* chap. 33, vol. 2, pp. 37, 38.

"But upon this one point the master of the Romans [Augustus] could make no impression upon the dogged disobedience of his subjects: both the men and women pre-

## *The Marriage Ceremony*

In respect to the mode of performing the marriage ceremony, the divine law does not prescribe any: and nothing more was necessary, in ancient times, to constitute a valid marriage than a mutual agreement, or actual cohabitation. The ancient Romans had three different modes of tying the hymeneal knot, each with a different degree of looseness, but none of them so firm as it should be. The ceremony has always varied in different States, and at different times in the same State, and should never be regarded as anything more than a public recognition of a relationship already formed and completed between the parties. Yet as marriage is a matter of important consequence to the friends and kindred of the parties, and also to the whole State, involving public as well as pri-

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ferred the loose terms of union upon which they had consented to cohabit, etc."—*Ibid.*

"Augustus most anxiously, both by law and precept, encouraged marriage; but the profligacy of the manners which then prevailed was such that all the honors and rewards and immunities which he prepared were of but little avail."—*Keightley's Hist. of the Roman Empire,* chap i, p. 11.

"The principal cause of the prevalent aversion to marriage was the extreme dissoluteness of manners at that time, exceeding anything known in modern days. . . . The first law on the subject was the Julian, '*De Maritandis Ordinibus,*' of 736; and this having proved ineffectual, a new and more comprehensive law, embracing all the provisions of the Julian, and named the '*Papia-Poppœan,*' was passed in the year 762,"—*Ibid.,* chap. 2, p. 34.

vate obligations, it is eminently proper that some appropriate ceremony should be performed, and that it should be sufficiently public to leave no doubt as to its reality. Yet marriages are made in heaven; the claim of the Romish Church to make and unmake them is a blasphemous assumption. No ceremony can add to their religious validity; and it can only be necessary to their legality and publicity.

# Chapter III

# ORIGIN OF POLYGAMY

# III. ORIGIN OF POLYGAMY

## *Prejudices to Be Overcome*

HAVING thus fulfilled my promise to analyze and demonstrate some of the fundamental laws of marriage, I shall now attempt, with equal candor and simplicity, to trace the origin and indicate the moral characteristics of the two social systems of monogamy and polygamy, and to apply to them the same tests of philosophical analysis and comparison. And here allow me again to say that it is necessary to arm ourselves with patient candor, or we cannot appreciate the truth and justice of any fair analysis of these systems. As we have been brought up under the system of monogamy, we have inherited the prejudices of that system; and, having been taught to look upon the opposite one with detestation and contempt, we are, on that account, but ill-qualified to judge between them. Let us remember that, whether our prejudices are right or wrong, they are prejudices only. We have

not stopped to reason; we have been content to cherish our opinions on this subject without examination and without reason. We have always accustomed ourselves to believe that polygamy originated in barbarism; that it is perpetuated by barbarians only, and that it panders to the basest and most depraved of human passions. But let us now think for ourselves. For one, I claim that right. I dare to question the superior purity of monogamy; and on behalf of the despised and persecuted system of polygamy, I venture to appeal from the rash decisions of prejudice to the solemn tribunals of divine and natural law; and in support of this appeal I cite the facts of sacred and profane history, and plead the inalienable rights of man.

## *Polygamy is Not Barbarism*

If European monogamists have hitherto surpassed all other men in civilization and social happiness, it is not on account of their monogamy, but, no doubt, on account of their Christianity. Even a perverted Christianity, a corrupted Christianity, a Roman Christianity, is better than idolatry or Mohammedanism. What, then, may we not hope when Christianity shall become free and pure, and restored to its pristine simplicity and glory?

An idolatrous nation practising monogamy has never been able long to exist. History does not

furnish one example. Such nations soon become so incurably corrupt as to incur the wrath of God, and are swept from the face of the earth. Neither civilization nor barbarism; military power or pusillanimity; tyranny or freedom; monarchy, aristocracy, or democracy; literature, art, wealth, genius, or stupidity has ever been able to save them. Many such States and nations have started in the race of glory and perpetual empire; but each of them has come to premature decay. Such were the different States of ancient Greece and ancient Italy, many of them distinguished for having produced men of the most brilliant genius and the most renowned experience in the various arts of peace and war, and several of them achieving extensive conquests and becoming vast empires; yet they very soon collapsed and went to ruin. And such was the fate of the many score or perhaps hundreds of the petty States of all Europe before the establishment of Christianity. They rose, they flourished, they became licentious, they fell. Wave after wave of the purer races of the polygamists of Asia rolled over them, and assumed their places; and as these, in turn, fell into their social habits, and adopted their monogamy, and became corrupt, they also became extinct, and were succeeded by newer and purer immigrants. On the other hand, the polygamists of Asia have preserved their social purity, and along with it many of their nationalities, through every age, notwithstanding their idol-

atry and Mohammedanism. Such are the nations of China, Japan, Persia and Arabia, whose living languages and existing laws date back to the very earliest records of antiquity. An intelligent Christian nation practising polygamy has never yet existed, simply because the two institutions have hitherto been falsely deemed incompatible and irreconcilable. The Gnostic heresy had so soon corrupted the springs of Christian learning, and the Grecian and Roman hierarchies had so soon usurped the seats of Christian authority, that the freedom and simplicity of the pristine faith were perverted, even before such an experiment could be made, as I shall fully demonstrate in the next chapter; and now it is most probable that, if such an experiment shall ever be made, it will be somewhere upon the continent of free America.

Polygamy is not barbarism, for it has been maintained and supported by such men as Abraham, Moses, David, and Solomon; whose superiors in all that constitute the highest civilization—knowledge, piety, wisdom, and refinement of mind and manners—the world has never known, either in ancient or modern times. Yet polygamy, though it be not barbarism, has almost always and everywhere prevailed where a simple, natural, and inartificial state of society subsists. Its origin is coeval with that of the human race. It is mentioned before the flood. It is mentioned soon after the flood. As soon as mankind were multiplied upon the earth,

it was discovered that the number of the women exceeded that of the men; and also that the amorous passions of the men were stronger than those of the women. Polygamy brings both these inequalities together, and allows them to correct each other. It furnishes every woman who wishes to marry a husband and a home; and gives every man an opportunity of expending his superabundant vitality in an honest way.

If it be objected that God created but one woman for Adam, it is a sufficient answer to reply, that both the man and the woman were also created perfect. They were perfect in health, and perfect in morals. But we are now imperfect in both respects; and we now need a social system adapted to men and women as they are. If humanity shall ever be restored to its pristine strength and beauty, the equality of the sexes will also be restored, and there will be a man for every woman, and a woman for every man; a true woman without imperfection, whose accomplishments will not be superficial, nor whose attractions artificial; but whose rosy cheeks and pearly teeth and swelling breasts and clustering ringlets shall be all her own. God speed the day! Should I live to see it, I would become an advocate for monogamy. But, as it now is, there is not a man for every woman; and either some women must remain unmarried and "waste their sweetness on the desert air," and be entirely deprived of their birthright, and denied all matri-

monial advantages, or they may, several of them, agree to share those advantages in common with each other, by having a single husband between them. Polygamy does not compel them to do this: it only permits them to do it in case they have no opportunity to do better. On the other hand, it does not compel a man to marry even one woman, much less to have more; but, if the intensity of his passion urges him to such lengths that he must have and will have more than one, it requires him to take them honestly and honorably, and to support them and be a true husband to them.

## *Polygamy Taught in the Bible*

The Sacred Scriptures represent the wisest and best men that ever lived, as practising polygamy with the divine blessing and approval. David had seven wives before he reigned in Jerusalem, "and he took more concubines and wives out of Jerusalem, after he was come from Hebron," for God "gave him the house of Saul and the wives of Saul into his bosom."* When God reproved Abimelech, king of Gerar, for his intended adultery with Sara, wife of Abraham, he did, at the same time, approve of his polygamy; for Abimelech said, "In the integrity of my heart and innocence of my hands have I done this." "Said he not unto me, She is my sister? and she, even she herself, said,

* 2 Sam. iii, 2—5, 14; v, 13; xii, 8.

He is my brother." And God said, "I know that thou didst this in the integrity of thy heart:" "now, therefore, restore the man his wife." "And God healed Abimelech and his wife and his maid-servants." God could allow him to live in open polygamy, without reproof, and "in the integrity of his heart," but could not allow him to commit adultery, even ignorantly.* Solomon was reproved for multiplying the number of his wives to an unreasonable and ostentatious degree, but more especially for having taken them from heathen nations; for "they turned away his heart after other gods:" but these are the only reasons assigned for his reproof, there being no intimation that polygamy was wrong in itself. But it is unnecessary to cite other examples from the Bible. No one familiar with that book has ever denied that polygamy is taught in the Old Testament, and yet most Christians suppose it to be forbidden in the New. Have we any right to such a supposition? Are we right in entertaining *any supposition* on this subject? If it is forbidden in the New Testament, have we not a right to demand the most unequivocal and undoubted proofs of such prohibition? Is it not possible that this supposition is an error? And, if it be an error, is it not possible that it has been one means of lessening our reverence for the Old Testament, and thereby undermining our confidence in the Bible as a whole? I copy the follow-

* Gen. xx.

ing paragraph from an essay of the Rev. S. W. Foljambe, recently delivered by him, at a Sabbath-school Teachers' Convention at Boston, with my most hearty recommendation:—

"It is sad to believe that infidelity in some form prevails throughout our State, yet we cannot doubt that it is even so, generally covert with an outward profession of regard for Christianity, but nevertheless real, accompanied by a disregard and disbelief of the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments. I refer to this not as any proof that Protestantism or Christianity is, or can be, a failure, or that the Scriptures are in any real danger, but as indicating a responsibility resting on us to maintain and defend the equal authority and inspiration of the Holy Scriptures; that 'all Scripture is given by inspiration of God;' that its writers, whether Moses or David, Isaiah or Paul, Ezekiel or John, were 'holy men of God who wrote as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.' It is not true that, among many who hold to the truth and reality of a divine revelation, there has come to be a feeling that in some way the New Testament has superseded the Old, and that the Old has ceased to be 'profitable for doctrine, for correction, for reproof, for instruction in righteousness'? Now, if this can be demonstrated, what is there to prove that in a still more advanced stage of spiritual life, as is claimed by many, the New Testament itself may not be superseded by some wiser interpretations of the

meaning and purpose of Christ's life, and the Gospels of Matthew and of John be superseded by the gospel of Strauss and Renan; or the interpretations of Paul as to the person and work of Christ be superseded by the interpretation of W. R. Greg and the Unitarian School?

"It seems to me that our Lord is explicit on this point, that the Jewish Scriptures were not and could not be superseded by any later revelation even by himself: 'Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill;' and again—'Had ye believed Moses, ye would have believed me, for he wrote of me;' and he is continually quoting them as authority, showing that there is no inconsistency between the two revelations. Together they form one continuous and connected divine word. True, the Scriptures are composed of books that are cumulative and progressive, but they are interdependent. The internal meaning of the two parts is entirely harmonious. The divine Spirit is in them both. They never contradict, but always interpret, explain, and illustrate each other."

## *The New Testament Sanctions Polygamy*

But let the inspiration and perpetual authority of the Old Testament be fully admitted, yet the modern Christian may say, "We do not live under the First Covenant, nor observe the ceremonies of

Moses; but we live in the New Dispensation, under the full light of the gospel: Christ has fulfilled the ritual and emblematical ordinances of the law, and set them aside; and it is presumed that the ancient marriage laws have been set aside among the rest, and superseded by the purer system of monogamy." But this assumption cannot be supported either by sufficient testimony or by valid reasoning. The social system of polygamy had existed before the time of Moses, and had no dependence upon the ceremonial law which was instituted in his day. That law only confirmed it as a pre-existent institution. Marriage laws cannot be regarded as merely ritual and emblematical; they are moral and fundamental, guarding the dearest rights and punishing the deepest wrongs of mankind. They are, therefore, equally permanent with those laws protecting life and property, those inculcating obedience to parents and rulers, and those maintaining the sanctity of oaths. All these, together with the marriage laws, existed before the time of Moses, and have survived the time of Christ. They are among those "laws" that Jesus came not to *subvert* but to *ratify;* as Dr. George Campbell of Aberdeen has, in Matt. v, 17, very exactly translated the terms καταλῦσαι and πληρῶσαι. Hence the marriage system of polygamy never formed a part of that ceremonial dispensation which was abrogated by the New Testament; nor has it ever been proved that the New Testament was designed to affect any

change in it; but the presumption is that this new dispensation has also left it, as it found it,—abiding still in force. If any change were to be made in an institution of such long standing, confirmed by positive law, it could obviously be made only by equally positive and explicit ordinances or enactments of the gospel. But such enactments are wanting. Christ himself was altogether silent in respect to polygamy, not once alluding to it, yet it was practised at the time of his advent throughout Judæa and Galilee, and in all the other countries of Asia and Africa, and, without doubt, by some of his own disciples.

The Book of the Acts is equally silent as the four Gospels are. No allusion to it is found in any of the sermons or instructions or discussions of the apostles and early saints recorded in that book. It was not because Jesus or the apostles durst not condemn it, had they considered it sinful, that they did not speak of it, for Jesus hesitated not to denounce the sins of hypocrisy, covetousness, and adultery, and even to alter and amend, apparently, the ancient laws respecting divorce and retaliation; but he never rebuked them for their polygamy, nor instituted any change in that system. And this uniform silence, so far as it implies anything, implies approval. John the Baptist was thrown into prison, where he was afterwards beheaded, for reproving King Herod on account of his adultery: and we cannot doubt, that, if he had

considered polygamy to be sinful, he would have mentioned it; for Herod's father was, just before that time, living with nine wives, whose names are recorded by Josephus, in his "Antiquities of the Jews;" but John only reproved him for marrying Herodias, his brother Philip's wife, while his brother was living. He administered the same reproof to Herod that Nathan had formerly done to David, and for similar reasons. The apostles always denounced the sins of fornication and adultery, but never denounced polygamy, nor intimated in any way that it was a sin. In all the long and painful catalogues of sins enumerated in the first, second, and third chapters of Romans, many of which relate to the unlawful indulgence of the amorous propensities, polygamy is not once named. It is the very place where it is morally certain that it would have been named if it were sinful; and, that it is not there named, we are fully warranted to believe that it is not sinful.

## *Monogamy of Bishops and Deacons*

The only portions of the Sacred Writings which seem to disapprove of polygamy are found in the epistles of Paul concerning the qualifications of bishops and deacons. These passages have been variously interpreted by various commentators. Some suppose that it forbids these officers of the church from contracting a second marriage after

the death of the first wife; others that it forbids any married persons being inducted into these sacred offices—that they must be the husbands of one wife, at least,—but that it does not forbid them taking more. But the commonly received opinion, and the one to which I am myself inclined, is, that in choosing men for these offices, such men should be chosen who are not much inclined to amorous pleasures, and each of whom has one wife only. They should be men of peculiar temperance and sobriety. This implies that polygamy was still practised in the primitive Christian churches; for otherwise it would have been superfluous and irrelevant to mention this as a special qualification in a candidate for one of those offices. And even this recommendation applies only to candidates, and not to those who have been already ordained. In confirmation of these views I here cite the authority of James McKnight, D. D., one of the most learned commentators on the New Testament.

"As the Asiatic nations universally practised polygamy, from an inordinate love of the pleasures of the flesh, the apostle ordered, by inspiration, that none should be made bishops but those who, by avoiding polygamy, had showed themselves temperate in the use of sensual pleasures. . . . It may be objected, perhaps, that the gospel ought to have prohibited the people, as well as the ministers of religion, from polygamy and divorce, if these things were morally evil. As to divorce, the

answer is, all, both clergy and people, were restrained from unjust divorces by the precept of Christ. With respect to polygamy being an offence against political prudence, rather than against morality, it had been permitted to the Jews by Moses, and was generally practised by the Eastern nations as a matter of indifference; it was, therefore, to be corrected mildly and gradually, by example rather than by express precept, without occasioning those domestic troubles and causeless divorces which must necessarily have ensued, if, by an express injunction of the apostles, husbands, immediately on their becoming Christians, had been obliged to put away all their wives except one."—*Commentary on* 1 *Tim.* iii, 2.

This testimony is specially valuable as being extorted, by the force of truth, from an avowed advocate of monogamy. Although it is highly colored by that system, yet these *four points* are distinctly admitted. 1. That polygamy was commonly practised by the primitive Christians. 2. That it had been expressly permitted in the Old Testament. 3. That it was not prohibited in the New Testament. 4. That it was from political and prudential considerations, and not from any immorality in it, that candidates for the ministry were recommended to abstain from it. Hence, we conclude that this recommendation of the apostle was made out of respect to the prejudices of the Greeks and Romans, under whose laws they were

then living, and who practised a corrupt and licentious monogamy, which I shall describe in the next chapter. It was doubtless for similar reasons that the same apostle recommended to the Corinthian Christians not to marry; but no one except a Shaking Quaker or a Roman Catholic can believe that such a recommendation was intended to apply to all persons, at all times and places, or that it was proper then, on any other grounds than the notorious corruption of Corinthian morals.

## *Polygamy Approved by Mosaic Law*

Now polygamy is either right, or it is wrong. If it is wrong, it is contrary to the will of God. If it is contrary to the will of God now, it always has been, ever since the fall of man; for God has not changed, human nature has not changed, and the mutual relation of the sexes has not changed. If it is contrary to the divine will, God would certainly have expressed decided disapprobation of it in his word, and denounced those who practised it. But on the contrary, it was, by the Mosaic law, expressly sanctioned, and, under certain circumstances, expressly commanded, as fully appears from Deut. xxii, 28, and xxv, 5. In the former passage it was commanded that, if any man (whether married or unmarried) had had illicit intercourse with an unbetrothed virgin, then he *must marry* her, and must not put her away all his life. In the

other passage it was commanded that, when a married man died without issue, his brother *must marry* his widow. And this command is positive, whether the surviving brother have a wife already, or not; and even if several such married brothers should die, and leave no offspring, the surviving brother would be obliged, by this law, to marry all the widows; and in each case, the first-born children would succeed to the inheritances of their mothers' first husbands, but the younger children would belong to their own father. This was a law in Israel long before the ceremonial law of Moses, as we learn from the 38th chapter of Genesis, where it is stated that Onan, the son of Judah, was required to marry the widow of his brother Er, and because he took a wicked course to prevent having offspring by her, he was put to death by the immediate act of God. The entire book of Ruth, also, constitutes a beautiful illustration and commentary of this ancient law; and it is mentioned in the New Testament in such terms as to imply that it was still in force in the time of Christ (Matt. xxii, 24-28).

I sum up the divine testimony thus: If polygamy is now a vice and a sin, like adultery or lying or stealing, it always has been and always will be a sin; and God would never have approved or commanded it: but we have seen above, that he has commanded it in two cases at least, viz., in case of the married man's illicit intercourse with an un-

betrothed virgin, and in case of the married man's brother's widow; and in these cases, therefore, it cannot be a sin. In further proof of its innocence, let it be remembered that it was practised without rebuke by Abraham, when he was styled "The Friend of God;" by Jacob, when his name was changed to Israel on account of his piety and his faith; by David, when God himself "gave testimony, and said, I have found David the son of Jesse a man after my own heart;" and by many others whose names will be held in everlasting remembrance, being preserved in Holy Writ, long after those of modern pseudo-religionists, who now denounce polygamy as barbarous and sinful, shall have perished in oblivion.

# Chapter IV

# ORIGIN OF MONOGAMY

# IV. ORIGIN OF MONOGAMY

## *Monogamy a Pagan Abomination*

I HAVE demonstrated that monogamy is not commanded by the Bible, and that it is not the doctrine of Christianity. I shall now account for its origin, by proving that it is the joint offspring of Paganism and Romanism. The social system of European monogamy is proved to be derived from ancient Greeks and Romans (especially from the latter), by the early histories of the nations of Europe, and by an uninterrupted descent of traditional customs from them to our own times. It is one of those pagan abominations which we have inherited, which the Roman Church has sanctioned and confirmed, and from which we find it difficult to emancipate ourselves.

## *Greek and Roman Immorality*

The ancient Greek and Roman notions of marriage and of chastity were in some respects different from ours, but only as Christianity has made them

different. We are ready to admit, at least in theory, what Christianity requires, that the laws of chastity are binding upon men and women equally, and that no person can innocently indulge in amorous pleasure except with his own wife or her own husband. But among them this rule of chastity applied to the female sex alone. The other sex claimed and exercised their freedom from it, without concealment or palliation, and at the same time without the loss of moral character or of public esteem. For men to be grossly addicted to whoredom and seduction was no dishonor: it was only when convicted of sodomy that they were pronounced unchaste.

Marriage was not expected or intended to preserve the public purity, or to secure domestic happiness, but was rather designed to perpetuate their heroic races, to preserve their rich patrimonial estates, and to maintain the ascendency of their aristocratic families. For these purposes they guarded the chastity of their wives with vigilant jealousy and punished their adultery with severity; the husbands placed themselves under no such restrictions either in law or in fact, but they habitually sought their own pleasures away from home, in the public haunts of impurity, at the house of an Aspasia, of a Leona, or of a Messalina, or at some other establishment of their numerous Cyprian and Corinthian dames; or, if they could not pay the extravagant prices demanded by these

celebrated beauties, they could at least resort to their public temples, and gratify their lust among the prostitutes kept there.*

## *Ancient Roman Marriages*

The monogamy of the ancient Romans, from and after the time of two hundred years at least before the Christian era, did not require their marriages to be permanent. The principle of a life-long relationship between the husband and wife, which both Moses and Christ have insisted upon, formed no part of their social system. Marriage, among

* "The Greeks had but little pleasure in the society of their wives. At first, the young husband only visited her by stealth: to be seen in company with her was a disgrace."—*Bulwer's Hist. of Athens,* book i, chap. 6.

"In the times of Corinthian opulence and prosperity, it is said that the shrine of Venus was attended by no less than one thousand female slaves dedicated to her service as courtesans. These priestesses of Venus contributed not a little to the wealth and luxury of the city."—*Anthon's Classical Dict., art. "Corinthus."*

Strabo, in his great work on Geography, in speaking of the temple of Venus in Corinth, says, "There were more than a thousand harlots, the slaves of the temple, who, in honor of the goddess, prostituted themselves to all comers for hire, and through these the city was crowded, and became wealthy."—Book 8, p. 151.

"Gravely impressing upon his wife and daughters that to sing and dance, to cultivate the knowledge of languages, to exercise the taste and understanding, was the business of the hired courtesan, it was to the courtesan that he repaired himself for the solace of his own lighter hours."—*Merivale's Hist. of the Romans,* vol. ii, chap. 33, p. 32.

them, was not so much a religious ceremony inculcating and requiring solemn vows of binding obligation, as a civil compact, instituted for purposes of mere present convenience or family aggrandizement. It originated in policy rather than in love. They were not, of course, destitute of the passion of love, for they were human beings; but that passion was permitted to influence them but little in contracting their marriages. They systematically degraded their love into lust. Their monogamy required it. Whenever they loved a woman they would manage to enjoy her favors without marriage. Seduction, adultery, and whoredom were rather the rule than the exception among them; but marriage was for other and more important purposes than those of love. It was rather an alliance of interests than of affections, and an affinity of families rather than of hearts.

And as policy made marriages, so policy often unmade them. If a man could at any time form a new alliance which would give him more wealth or influence, he always felt himself at liberty to divorce his wife, and form that new alliance. It was not uncommon for a man to have had half a dozen different wives, in as many years.

## *Intricacy of Pagan Relationships*

Imbecility and barrenness, the usual penalties which Nature inflicts upon the violators of the

marriage laws, came upon them. Their children were few and short lived, and in order to maintain their family influence, and transmit their names and their wealth to future generations, which it was their great ambition to do, they were obliged to resort to the expedient of very frequent adoptions, by taking the children of distant relations, or of those allied to them by marriage, and calling them their own. And such were the frequency of their divorces, and the intricacy of their relationships caused by their numerous adoptions, that it has been almost impossible for the best historians and biographers to give us any intelligible account of their families. Such authors as Gibbon, Anthon, Keightley, and Merivale, who are usually accurate in other respects, are found utterly at fault, when they undertake to state the relationship which the most eminent personages of Roman history bear to one another.*

**Contradictions and Inaccuracies of Eminent Historians.*

ANTHON—In art. "Drusus," in his Classical Dictionary, Dr. Charles Anthon says that Drusus "was born three months after his mother's marriage with Augustus"; but in art. "Livia" he says, "She had already borne two sons to her first husband, viz., Tiberius and Drusus, and was six months gone in pregnancy with another child, which was the only one she ever had after her union with Augustus, and which died almost at the moment of its birth."

In art. "Julia II," he calls her the mother of Augustus; and in art. "Augustus," he says his mother was Atia, the daughter of Julia.

In art. "Julia IV," he calls Scribonia the first wife of Augustus; but in art. "Augustus," he calls her his third wife.

## *The Promiscuity of the Cæsars*

In order to give some just conception of Roman monogamy at that time when it first came in con-

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In art. "Messalina," he says she was the first wife of Claudius; and in art. "Ælia Pætina," he says Ælia was the former wife of Claudius, and that she was repudiated to make way for Messalina. And, according to Suetonius, Ælia was, in fact, the fourth, and Messalina the fifth, of his wives.

In art. "Julius Cæsar," he says his first wife was divorced in consequence of the affair of Clodius; but in art. "Clodius," he says it was against Pompeia that Clodius had illicit designs, and in art. "Pompeia," he says she was Cæsar's third wife, etc.

KEIGHTLEY—In his Hist. of Rom. Empire, p. 11, he says, Scribonia was the first wife of Augustus; but she was his third. On the same page he says, Tiberius married Agrippina, who was the younger daughter of Agrippa; but Tiberius did not marry her, but he married Vipsania, her older sister; and his brother Drusus married Agrippina, and he was the only husband she ever had, which was a remarkable circumstance for Roman ladies in those days.

On the same page he repeats the error of Anthon mentioned above,—that Drusus was born after his mother's marriage with Augustus. Two similar errors occur on p. 13.

LIDDELL.—On p. 726 of Dr. Liddell's Hist. of Rome, there are three errors of this kind within the limits of twice as many lines, viz., he calls the name of one of Augustus's wives Clodia for Claudia; he says Scribonia was his second wife, for his third; and says that Livia, at the time of her marriage to Augustus, was pregnant of her second child instead of her third. Thus it is demonstrated that very respectable modern historians are accustomed to perpetuate error by compiling and copying from each other, when they should, everyone of them, go back to the original and exact authorities, and thus eliminate the truth.

Messrs. Harper & Brothers, New York, have republished the above work of Dr. Liddell so faithfully as to give us page for page, line for line, and word for word, an exact reprint of the English edition by John Murray; reproducing

tact with Christianity, and when it began to impose its social system upon the other nations of Europe (for these two events are quite synchronous), I will now, as briefly as possible, give some account of the domestic life and manners of the six imperial Cæsars, who governed Rome at that period. In this account I shall enumerate their many marriages, and their numerous divorces and adoptions, and state their relationship to each other. By this means, I hope to be able to explain the complexity of Roman affinities, which has baffled the apprehension of so many acute and learned historians, and at the same time to exhibit the original nature and true spirit of Roman monogamy. "Ex pede Herculum"; from the Cæsars let us learn the Romans.

I should hesitate to pollute my pages with these delineations of Roman manners, if the nature of my treatise did not require it. But it is necessary to the plan and scope of this work that the analytical examination of the origin and early history

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not only such historical blunders as those above noticed, but even the most obvious typographical errors; *e.g.*, on p. 250, under the bust of Scipio, there is L., for Lucius Scipio Africanus, instead of P., for Publius Scipio Africanus; and on p. 453, footnote, we are referred to the end of chapter 37, for the bust of Ennius, when it is not there, but at the end of chapter 50, etc. Such exact faithfulness in following copy is worthy of the well-known skilfulness of the Chinese tailor, who, when about to make a new garment in European style, took home an old one for a pattern, which he succeeded in imitating with exactness, even to the patches.

of our present marriage system should be conducted with philosophical exactness,—an exactness that requires explicit facts, which I have spared no time nor labor to search out, and which I am not at liberty to withhold, however revolting they may be. In order that modern monogamists may clearly see the justice or the injustice of the boasted claims of their system to superior purity and virtue, it is very proper that they look to the rock whence they were hewn and to the hole of the pit whence they were dug.

The single family of the Cæsars is selected as an example, not because it is the worst example which those times produced, for, on the contrary, there is abundant evidence that Sylla and Catiline, and Clodius and Sejanus, and the emperors Domitian and Commodus and Caracalla, and many others of their contemporaries, exceeded the Cæsars in profligacy; but the domestic history of the latter family is given, because it is the most authentic, and the most familiar to all classical and historical scholars. Caius Suetonius Tranquillus, commonly called Suetonius, is the principal authority for the facts cited; and his testimony is confirmed by all the other authorities of his own age, and fully allowed by those of every subsequent age. As he was born A.D. 70, very near the time of those whose lives he records; as he has maintained a reputation for candor and impartiality; as he was private secretary to the Emperor

Hadrian, and had access to the secret archives of the Cæsars, and often alludes to their handwriting, —no one has ever questioned either his authenticity or his credibility.

1. JULIUS CÆSAR.—Caius Julius Cæsar, the dictator, married successively four wives, whose names were, 1. Cossutia; 2. Cornelia; 3. Pompeia; and, 4. Calpurnia. Cossutia was a wealthy heiress, and was married for her money; but she was divorced before Cæsar was eighteen years of age (which was, according to Roman law, during the first year of his majority), upon the occasion of the triumph of the party of Marius, to which Cæsar had attached himself; when the ambitious youthful politician and future conqueror was permitted to marry Cornelia, the daughter of Cornelius Cinna, the consul, and the friend and colleague of Marius: by which alliance Cæsar brought himself at once into public notice, and began to aspire to the highest offices of state. Cornelia died young, after having given birth to Cæsar's only legitimate child, a daughter, named Julia; who was married to Pompey the Great, at the formation of the first Triumvirate, but who died without issue. Pompeia, Cæsar's third wife, was divorced, in favor of Calpurnia, who survived him. He repudiated Pompeia in consequence of the affair of the infamous Clodius, who had introduced himself into Cæsar's house, disguised in female apparel, for the purpose of assailing the virtue of Pompeia, at the festi-

val of the Bona Dea, when, by law and by custom, it was deemed the greatest sacrilege for any male to be found upon the premises. Cæsar at once divorced his wife, but brought no charge against Clodius; though he was tried for the sacrilege upon the accusation of Cicero. When Cæsar was called as a witness, and was asked why he had put away his wife, he answered with the proud remark, that his wife's chastity must not only be free from corruption, but must also be above suspicion. Yet Cæsar himself, who made this memorable remark, was excessively addicted to gross sensuality, and was the father of several illegitimate children. Suetonius says that he committed adultery with many ladies of the highest quality in Rome; among whom he specifies Posthumia, the wife of Servius Sulpitius, Lollia, the wife of Aulus Gabinius, Tertullia, the wife of Marcus Crassus, Mutia, the wife of Pompey the Great, Eunoe, the wife of Bogudes, Cleopatra, Queen of Egypt, and Servilia, the mother of Marcus Brutus, to whom he presented a pearl costing six millions of sesterces (equal to two hundred thirty-two thousand, one hundred and seven dollars); at the same time seducing her daughter Tertia. Yet, in another paragraph, Suetonius says the only stain upon Cæsar's chastity was his having committed sodomy with Nicomedes, King of Bithynia; which proves what has before been said, that the Romans did not consider fornication, or even adultery, as constituting un-

chastity in men, but only in women; and that they expected and permitted licentiousness in the most respectable men, as a necessary part of their social system of monogamy. It is evidently with similar opinions of their social system that Dr. Liddell thus sums up the character of Cæsar:—"Thus died 'the foremost man in all the world,' a man who failed in nothing that he attempted. He might, Cicero thought, have been a great orator: his 'Commentaries' remain to prove that he was a great writer. As a general, he had few superiors; as a statesman and politician, no equal. His morality in domestic life was not better nor worse than commonly prevailed in those licentious days. He indulged in profligate amours freely and without scruple; but public opinion reproached him not for this. He seldom, if ever, allowed pleasure to interfere with business, and here his character forms a notable contrast to that of Sylla," etc.*

2. AUGUSTUS.—He was the grand-nephew and adopted son of Cæsar, being the grandson of his sister Julia, wife of Marcus Atius. Their daughter, named Atia (sometimes written Attia or Accia), married Caius Octavius, and became the mother of Augustus and his sister Octavia. His name, at first, was identical with that of his father, Caius Octavius; but Julius Cæsar, having failed of any direct

* Suet. Vit. Jul. Cæsar, par. 40-50. Liddell's Hist. of Rome: London, 1857; book 7. Anthon's Class. Dict., art. "Cæsar, Mutia," etc.

male heir, adopted him in his last will and testament, as his son; and upon the publication of the will, he assumed his adopted father's family name: twenty years afterwards the additional name or title, Augustus, was conferred upon him by vote of the Senate, and then his full name became Caius Julius Cæsar Octavianus Augustus.

Like his great-uncle, Augustus had four wives, named, 1. Servilia; 2. Claudia; 3. Scribonia; and, 4. Livia Drusilla, whom he successively married and necessarily divorced, except the last, who survived him. And like Cæsar he had but one child — a daughter — also named Julia, who was the daughter of his third wife, Scribonia. This wife he divorced soon after he obtained supreme power, and at the same time married Livia Drusilla. She was already married to Claudius Nero: she had borne her husband two sons, and was then six months advanced in pregnancy with her third child; but Augustus demanded her on account of her beauty and accomplishments, and her husband durst not refuse the demand. She was therefore divorced from Nero, and married to Augustus. Her child was born not long afterwards, and died at birth. She was at this time twenty years of age, and highly educated. She had already traveled in foreign countries, and, to the fascinations of rare personal beauty, she added the charms of a cultivated mind.

Augustus's only child, Julia, was married three

times. Her first marriage was to Marcellus, her cousin, only son of Octavia, her father's sister. Marcellus died young, much lamented, and left no issue. Augustus had, some time before, compelled Agrippa, commander-in-chief of the army, to divorce his wife Pompeia, and marry Marcella, his sister Octavia's daughter; but now, on the death of Marcellus, he commanded Agrippa to divorce his niece, Marcellus's sister, and to marry his daughter, Marcellus's widow. By this second marriage Julia had five children, three of whom were boys, the youngest of which was born after his father's death and his mother's third marriage, and was named Agrippa Posthumus: the other two boys were called Caius and Lucius. This final marriage of Julia was to Tiberius Nero, the step-son of Augustus, and was without issue; it will be alluded to again under the notice of Tiberius. Julia was one of the most dissolute women of that dissolute age. And there can be no doubt that the age and the monogamous system were even more dissolute than the women, and caused them to become so when they were not so. The chastity of the Roman matrons and virgins was prized and honored as highly by themselves, and by their husbands and fathers and brothers, as it has ever been among any people in the world; as the legends of Lucretia and of Virginia and others can testify. The ordinances of God and of Nature in behalf of female purity were enforced among them, both by

their ancient traditions and by their current laws; and all combined to cause them to preserve their chastity to the last possible extremity. But that extremity had, with many of them, been reached. The unbounded license of the other sex, permitted by public opinion to be practised with the utmost impunity; the scant and insufficient opportunities for lawful marriages, and the frequent, unjust, and arbitrary divorces from those marriages; in fine, the whole theory of monogamy,—finally drove the women to desperate recklessness and ruin. It had been Julia's happy lot to be the wife of two honorable men, both eminent for their manliness,—Marcellus and Agrippa. She had also been the happy mother of five healthy children. And now, while still young, she found herself hastily and forcibly united to a man against his will; and that man a monster and a beast. It is not strange that she fell, nor that, in her fall, she dragged down many another with her. Her exalted rank easily seduced some of the noblest men of Rome to become her paramours. "And she became at length so devoid of shame and prudence as to carouse and revel openly, at night, in the Forum, and even on the Rostra. Augustus had already had a suspicion that her mode of life was not quite correct, and when convinced of the full extent of her depravity, his anger knew no bounds. He communicated his domestic misfortune to the Senate; he banished his dissolute daughter to the Isle of Pandateria, on the

coast of Campania, whither she was accompanied by her mother, Scribonia. He forbade her there the use of wine and of all delicacies in food or dress, and prohibited any person to visit her without his special permission. He caused a bill of divorce to be sent her in the name of her husband Tiberius, of whose letters of intercession for her he took no heed. He constantly rejected all the solicitations of the people for her recall; and when, one time, they were extremely urgent, he openly prayed that they might have wives and daughters like her." Her confidential servant and freedwoman, Phœbe, having hanged herself when her mistress's profligacy was made known, Augustus declared that he would rather be the father of Phœbe than of Julia. This treatment of his daughter, and this remark concerning her, is another confirmation of the different regard had in those times to the unchaste conduct of women and of men; for Augustus himself was a seducer and an adulterer, and was as profligate as his uncle Julius. Suetonius declares, that he constantly employed men to pimp for him, and that they took such freedom in selecting the most beautiful women for his embraces, that they compelled "both matrons and ripe virgins to strip for a complete examination of their persons." He also says, upon the authority of Marc Antony, that at an entertainment at his house, "he once took the wife of a man of consular rank from the table, in the pres-

ence of her husband, into his bed-chamber, and that he brought her again to the entertainment with her ears very red and her hair in great disorder," plainly implying that everyone could see that he had ravished her.

But it is the judgment of that distinguished scholar and historian, Dr. Liddell, that in these "and other less pardonable immoralities there was nothing to shock the feelings of Romans"; and Keightley thus sums up his character, "In his public character, as sovereign of the Roman empire, few princes will be found more deserving of praise than Augustus. He cannot be justly charged with a single cruel, or even harsh, action in the course of a period of forty-four years. On the contrary, he seems in every act to have had the welfare of the people at heart. In return, never was prince more entirely beloved by all orders of his subjects; and the title 'Father of his Country,' so spontaneously bestowed upon him, is but one among many proofs of the sincerity of their affection." "He was surrounded by no pomp; no guards attended him; no officers of the household were to be seen in his modest dwelling; he lived on terms of familiarity with his friends; he appeared like any other citizen, as a witness in courts of justice, and in the senate gave his vote as an ordinary member. He was plain and simple in his mode of living, using only the most ordinary food, and wearing no clothes but what were woven and made by his wife,

sister, and daughter. In all his domestic relations he was kind and affectionate; he was a mild and indulgent master, and an attached and constant friend."*

3. TIBERIUS.—Tiberius was the son of Claudius Nero and Livia Drusilla. He was not at all related by blood to the Julian family, but belonged by birth to the ancient Claudian gens; being allied to the former family only by marriage and adoption. His mother married Augustus when he was five years of age; he himself married Julia, Augustus's only daughter, when he was thirty; and Augustus adopted him as his son when he was forty-five: so that he was at once the step-son, the son-in-law, and the adopted son of Augustus. His name, at first, was Tiberius Claudius Drusus Nero; to which, after his adoption by Augustus, he added simply Cæsar. Augustus, with his characteristic prudence, as soon as he perceived that direct heirs in the male line were likely to fail him, began to make provision for the perpetuation of his name and fortune, as well as for the preservation of the peace of the empire, by making sons by adoption. He first adopted his two oldest grand-sons, Caius and Lucius Agrippa, in their early childhood; but they both died during the lifetime of Augustus, and left no issue, —Lucius at the age of nineteen years; and two

* Suet. Vit. Aug., par. 60-69; Liddell's Hist. of Rome, book 7; Keightley's Hist. of Rom. Emp., chaps. 1, 2.

year afterwards, Caius, at the age of twenty-four.* Drusus Nero, the younger brother of Tiberius, and the favorite step-son of Augustus, had also died before them; but he had left two sons, Germanicus and Claudius. These with Tiberius, and his only son Drusus, by his first wife Vipsania, and Agrippa Posthumus, the only remaining son of Julia, were all the males allied to Augustus. Upon the death of Caius, therefore, A.D. 6, Augustus adopted both Agrippa Posthumus and Tiberius, and caused Tiberius at the same time to adopt Germanicus: so that all the males of the family then became Cæsars, except Claudius Nero; but he was considered foolish, and was not included. Tiberius, as has been observed, was, at this time, forty-five years of age; and each of the three young men, Agrippa, Germanicus, and Drusus, was about nineteen.

Tiberius was married twice; first to Vipsania, eldest daughter of Agrippa, and after divorcing her, as usual, he married Julia, Agrippa's widow. It is but justice to Tiberius, to say that both the divorce and the marriage were hateful to him, and were consummated only upon the order of Augustus. He had lived happily with Vipsania, who was the mother of his only son, and who was then preg-

* Caius married Livilla, sister of Germanicus, and grand-niece to Augustus, but had no offspring; his widow afterwards married Drusus, son of Tiberius, by whom she had two children, Tiberius and Julia.

nant with her second child, while Julia was also pregnant with her fifth child by Agrippa.

Upon the death of Augustus, Tiberius commanded his step-brother Agrippa Posthumus to be put to death, and assumed sole command of the empire. His first order was but a sample of his government; for he soon became one of the most odious tyrants that ever cursed the world. His vices were of the most infamous character, and comprised all that are alluded to in the first chapter of Paul's Epistle to the Romans, and for which the ancient city of Sodom was destroyed by fire. In order to give loose reign to his worse than beastly propensities, he retired from Rome to that lovely sequestered island in the Bay of Naples, which was then called Capreæ, and which, in modern Italian, is now named Capri. "But," says Keightley, "this delicious retreat was speedily converted by the aged prince into a den of infamy, such as has never, perhaps, found its equal; and it almost chills the blood to read the details of the horrid practices in which he indulged amid the rocks of Capreæ." Like all the other Cæsars, Tiberius left no son. His son Drusus was married, and had a son and a daughter; but he was poisoned by his own wife Livilla, and died during his father's lifetime. The grand-son, named Tiberius, and the grand-daughter, named Julia, both survived him. His adopted son Germanicus, after achieving an excellent reputation as a man and a military com-

mander, had also died, about five years after the accession of Tiberius, at the age of thirty-four years, his death being attributed to slow poison secretly administered by the command of his adopted father. Germanicus left nine children; but all the sons were destroyed before the death of Tiberius, except one, named Caius, but commonly called Caligula. Tiberius therefore left two male heirs only,—Caius Caligula, his grand-son by adoption, and Tiberius, his grand-son by birth.*

4. CALIGULA.—Tiberius, by his last will, had appointed his two grandsons his joint and equal heirs; but Germanicus, the father of Caligula, had always been greatly beloved by the people, while Tiberius had been hated. The will was therefore unanimously set aside, and the sole power conferred upon Caligula. Thus was the line of the Cæsars still continued by adoption. Caligula was born A.D. 12, and became emperor at twenty-five years of age, A.D. 37. He was married four times. His wives' names were, 1. Junia Claudilla; 2. Livia Orestilla; 3. Lollia Paullina; and, 4. Milonia Cæsonia. The first died, the next two were divorced, the last survived him. Soon after the death of Junia, which was some time before he attained the supreme power, he took Ennia, the wife of Macro, as his favorite mistress, promising to procure a divorce from her husband and to marry her

* Suet.; Keightley; Anthon.

himself when he should attain the empire; and Macro appears to have acquiesced in this arrangement, selling his wife's virtue and the honor of his house for such rewards and emoluments as Caligula was pleased to accord to him. But in the second year of his administration, instead of fulfilling his engagements to Ennia and her husband, he neglected and disgraced them; so that they both committed suicide.

Caligula then took his own sister Drusilla, and lived in incest with her, having forced her husband, Lucius Cassius, to divorce her for that purpose; but, in order to cover the affair, he caused her to be married to one of his attendants, Marcus Lepidus, his cousin, with whom he was at the same time practising the still more horrid and unnatural crime of sodomy. Upon the death of this sister, which occurred during the same year, he mourned for her with the most extravagant grief, and caused her henceforth to be worshipped as a goddess; building a temple and consecrating priests in her honor. His own solemn oath ever after was, "By the divinity of Drusilla."

He next married Livia Orestilla; and in this strange and cruel manner. He had been invited to the wedding-feast of Caius Piso, a man belonging to one of the noblest families of Rome, whose bride was this same Livia. Caligula accepted the invitation; the marriage ceremony took place, and the feast was at its height, when, struck with the

beauty of the bride, he resolved to appropriate her to himself, and saying to Piso, "Do not touch my wife," he took her home with him. The next day he caused proclamation to be made for the information of the Roman public, that he had purveyed himself a wife after the manner of Augustus. It is not strange that under such circumstances he did not find her an agreeable consort, for her affections had been given to Piso, and with him only could she be happy. He therefore divorced her again, within three days of her marriage, but would not permit her to have her former husband.

The occasion of his marrying his next wife, Lollia Paullina, was equally strange, but quite different. He heard someone extol the beauty of her grandmother, and was inflamed with passion to enjoy hers. She was already married to Memmius Regulus, and was then away from Rome, in a foreign province, with her husband; but Caligula sent orders to Regulus to divorce his wife, ordered her home and married her. He lived with her about a year, when he divorced her for her barrenness; and then married his last wife, Cæsonia, with whom he had already been having illicit intercourse for many months, and who was now far advanced in pregnancy. She was a woman of infamous character, and had had three illegitimate children before; but he married her, and she was very soon delivered of a daughter, which was Caligula's only child.

During most of this time, since the death of Drusilla, he was living in incest with both his other sisters, Agrippina and Livilla, while at the same time he would prostitute them to his male favorites, the ministers of his more heathenish lusts. Suetonius says, that, in addition to these incests and adulteries already specified, he debauched nearly every lady of rank in Rome; whom he was accustomed to invite, along with their husbands, to a feast: he would then examine them, as they passed his couch one after another, as one would examine female slaves when about to purchase; and after supper he would retire to his bed-chamber, and then send for any lady present that he liked best.

During his administration public prostitutes paid twelve and a half per cent of their fees into the imperial treasury; and in order to increase this branch of the revenue he opened a brothel in his own palace, filled it with respectable (?) women, and sent out criers into the Forum to advertise it, and invite the people to resort to it.

Caligula was slain by the officers of his own guard, in the twenty-ninth year of his age, after governing the Roman world for less than four years. During the first year of his administration he had first adopted and then murdered the younger Tiberius Cæsar, then about seventeen years of age, who left no issue; and a few hours after his own death his wife Cæsonia was slain, and

also their infant daughter, who had its little brains dashed out against a wall: so the last of the Cæsars seemed to have perished. But there was one old man left, who, if he was not a Cæsar, was certainly related to all the Cæsars, and it was determined to make him a Cæsar, and raise him to the supreme power. This old man was Claudius Nero.

5. CLAUDIUS.—He was the uncle of Caligula, and the nephew of Tiberius. His name at first had been Tiberius Claudius Drusus Nero, to which he now added that of Cæsar. He was married six times. His wives' names were, 1. Æmilia Lepida; 2. Livia Medullina Camilla; 3. Plautia Urgullinilla; 4. Ælia Pætina; 5. Valeria Messalina; and, 6. Agrippina. Of these, the first, third, and fourth were divorced, the second died, the fifth was executed, and the last survived him. Ælia Pætina, the fourth, was divorced soon after Claudius obtained the empire, in order to make way for Messalina, whose principal recommendation was that she had already become pregnant by him. They were accordingly married: the child was born, and was a boy, whom they named Britannicus. She afterwards bore him a daughter called Octavia. Messalina's lust and cruelty were so unbounded, that her name has become the synonym of everything most vile and detestable in the female character. She has been called the Roman Jezebel; but the comparison is an injustice to the Samaritan queen. She was as much more wicked than Jeze-

bel as Roman monogamy is more impure than Jewish polygamy. Her husband's chief officers became her adulterers, and were allied with her in all her abominations. She cast an eye of lust on the principal men in Rome, and whom she could not seduce to gratify her vile propensities she would contrive to destroy. She was so excessive in her sensuality, that she often required the services of the strongest and most vigorous men to satisfy her lusts; and often for that reason chose gladiators and slaves; but such persons would not always venture to incur the risk of discovery, and then she would make her stupid husband the unwitting broker of her adulterous pleasures. As an example of this mode of procedure, in such cases, it is recorded that "when Mnester, a celebrated dancer, refused to yield to her solicitations or her threats, she procured a written order from Claudius, commanding him to do whatever she should require. Mnester then complied. The same was the case with many others, who believed they were obeying the orders of the prince when they were yielding to the libidinous desires of his wife."

But she was not content with being infamous herself, she determined to make others so; compelling many respectable married women to prostitute themselves, even in the palace, and in the presence of their husbands, who were powerless to prevent it, for she brutally destroyed those who would not acquiesce in their wives' dishonor. Meantime her

own excesses were unknown to Claudius; for she caused someone of her maids to occupy her place in his bed, and purchased by rewards, or anticipated by murder, those who could give him information. At length her enormities were discovered and brought to light in this manner,—a manner so strange and unnatural, that the grave historian Tacitus expressed his doubts whether posterity could be made to believe that any woman could be so wicked. Messalina had set her heart upon Caius Silius, the consul elect, who was esteemed the handsomest man in Rome. In order to obtain sole possession of him she drove his wife Junia out of his house; and Silius, knowing that to refuse her would be his destruction, while by compliance he might possibly escape, yielded to his fate. But the infatuated adulteress became so reckless that she disdained concealment and came openly to visit him, heaping wealth and honors upon him, and transferring the slaves and the treasures of the prince to his house. Silius then saw that he was so deep in guilt that either he or Claudius must perish, and proposed to Messalina to murder her husband and seize the supreme power. She hesitated; not from regard to her husband, but from the fear that, when Silius should be invested with the empire, he would cast her off. She therefore proposed, as an amendment to his plan, that they should be married first, and then murder the prince and seize the empire afterwards. This plan

was agreed to; and while Claudius was absent from the city to perform a sacrifice at Ostia, when he was building the new harbor there, they were publicly married, in due form, and with much ceremony. But their own attendants were shocked. They informed the prince; and the whole plot was discovered and the guilty parties put to death.

Claudius then took for his sixth and last wife his brother's daughter Agrippina; and as such a union was regarded as incestuous by the laws and customs of the Romans, Claudius first repaired to the senate-house, and caused a new law to be passed legalizing marriages between uncles and nieces, and then formally espoused her. Agrippina, the new imperial consort, was sister to the late emperor Caligula; and besides having lived in incest with him, she had been married twice before. By her first husband, Cneius Domitius Ahenobarbus, she had had a son, named Lucius, who was nine years of age at the time of her marriage with Claudius, and three years older than his only son Britannicus. To promote the interests of her own son Lucius, and to destroy Britannicus, was now the ruling passion of Agrippina; to gratify which she paused at nothing. Yet she was not, like Messalina, naturally inclined to licentiousness; but in order to win the influence and assistance of powerful men for promoting her ambitious designs in behalf of her son, she stooped so low as to prostitute herself to their lusts, when they could not be purchased by

any other means at her command. At first she managed to have Octavia, the sister of Britannicus, divorced from Silanus, to whom she had been betrothed, and married to her son Lucius, and, in a year or two afterwards, to have Lucius adopted by Claudius as his son. Three years afterwards she procured poison from the notorious Locusta, and put her husband, the emperor Claudius to death, in the sixty-fourth year of his age, after he had governed Rome a little less than fourteen years.*

6. NERO. — Agrippina carefully concealed the death of Claudius until secure measures had been taken for setting aside Britannicus, and for the succession of her own son; when the death was announced and the new emperor proclaimed. Nero was successively the grand-nephew, the step-son, the son-in-law, and the adopted son of Claudius; and, by adoption, the great-grandson of Tiberius; being son of the daughter of Germanicus, who was the adopted son of Tiberius. He was also, by birth, the grand-nephew of Augustus, by the collateral female line; his father, Domitius Ahenobarbus, being son of Antonia Major, eldest daughter of Octavia, sister of Augustus. His name, at first, was Lucius Domitius Ahenobarbus; but upon his adoption by Claudius, into the Julian family, he took the name of Nero Claudius Cæsar.

He was married seven times. The names of his

* Suet. Vit. Claud.; Tacitur Ann.; Keightley; Anthon.

seven consorts were, 1. Octavia; 2. Poppæa Sabina; 3. Octavia again; 4. Poppæa again; 5. Statilia Messalina; 6. Sporus; and, 7. Doryphorus. It will readily be seen, from this list, that his marriages and divorces were more numerous than his brides, and that the last two names are those of males.

Nero had no affection for his first wife, the chaste and modest Octavia, whom he had married from policy, and not for love: and his mother, the ambitious Agrippina, who loved power so much, was pleased with this indifference; for she hoped to maintain an undivided influence over him, and through him to rule the world. But in the second year of his administration he conceived a violent passion for an Asiatic freedwoman named Acte; a passion which his preceptor, the celebrated philosopher Seneca, and his other councillors of state, encouraged; permitting him to take her as his acknowledged mistress, without rebuke, hoping that this attachment would keep him from a life of promiscuous licentiousness and from debauching women of rank. But Agrippina was furious; not because Acte was a low-bred woman (though this was the excuse for her opposition), but she felt that her own power would be diminished by her: and she threatened that, if he did not give her up, she would herself abandon him, and would set up Britannicus; and, as the daughter of the beloved Germanicus, would appeal to the army against her son, in Britannicus' behalf. This was a powerful

argument, and Nero knew that his mother was capable of anything to maintain her power; but he resolved that, instead of giving up his mistress, he would murder his innocent brother. He procured poison from Locusta and gave it him, but it proved too weak; he then sent for Locusta again, and reproached her and beat her, and bade her prepare a stronger dose. She obeyed him; and, having proved the potency of the venom upon a kid and a pig, he had it given to Britannicus, in some cold water, at dinner. Its effect was instantaneous, and the poor boy dropped down dead. Nero carelessly remarked to the company that he had been subject to fits from infancy, and would soon recover. Agrippina and Octavia were struck with terror, and said nothing; the latter, young as she was, having learned to suppress her feelings, and the former perceiving that her son was fast becoming her superior both in cruelty and in craft.

Nero next became enamored of Poppæa Sabina, a lady of great beauty and of noble birth, who had been divorced from her first husband, Crispinus, and was then married to her second, Marcus Otho; but Otho was sent out as governor of the distant province of Portugal, and Nero gave himself up to the enjoyment of his adulterous passion. Then Agrippina became more furious than ever, for she saw that, if he should divorce Octavia, and marry Poppæa, her own influence would be gone forever. But she set to work in a different manner than

before; for such was her insane love of power, that, in order to retain her influence over her son, she began herself to pander to his vices, diverting and distracting his mind with a succession of beautiful ladies, offering her purse, and the use of her own apartments, for his private assignations, and even attempting to seduce him to unnatural incest with herself; and nothing but the fear of the army and of the people prevented them from the consummation of that abominable crime. Still the influence of Poppæa increased; and so did Agrippina's hatred and jealousy of her, until at length Nero resolved upon the crime of matricide, which he effected in the most barbarous manner. He first attempted to drown her, in a manner that might appear accidental, by sending her to sea in an unseaworthy vessel laden with lead; the deck of which was to give way at the proper time, and the vessel itself to fall in pieces. She went on board, and the deck fell, with its freight of lead, as was expected; but she was saved by the devotion of her attendants. He then sent assassins to shed her blood. When they entered her apartment, and one of them drew his sword, she exposed her womb, and cried out, "Strike here:" he obeyed, and thus she perished. But it was only after the lapse of three years more, that he divorced the virtuous Octavia, by whose alliance he had obtained the empire, and who was greatly beloved by the people. He effected her divorce, however, and married

Poppæa; but the murmurs of the people were so alarming, that, in a short time, he divorced Poppæa, and married Octavia the second time. But his affections were still unchanged, and he at length induced Anicetus, the assasin that had slain his mother, to make oath that Octavia had committed adultery with him; and, although nobody believed the wretch, this served as a pretext for divorcing her again. She was then banished to the usual place, the Island of Pandataria, where she was soon afterwards put to death, at twenty-one years of age, and her head sent as a present to Poppæa, to whom Nero was then married the second time. Soon after his marriage, to his great joy, she bore him a daughter, his first and only child, which lived, however, but a few months.

It was the next year after the birth of this infant, that Rome was burnt [A.D. 65]. The loss of lives, as well as of property, was very great. The streets of the city were narrow and crooked, and the flames spread so rapidly, that escape was difficult. The fire raged six days. Five-sevenths of the city was laid waste. Nero has often been charged with having caused the fires himself; but the charge has never been proved. He was strongly suspected at the time, and, in order to divert suspicion from himself, he laid the blame upon the innocent Christians. They had become already numerous in the city, and were generally hated and despised. They were put to death, upon this suspicion, with

torture and insult; some torn to pieces by dogs, after being sewed up in the skins of wild animals, some crucified, and some wrapped in pitch and set on fire, to serve for lamps in the night. Two years after the great fire, Poppæa came to her death in as brutal a manner as mother, sister, and brother had done before. She was killed by Nero, in a fit of anger, by a violent kick when in an advanced state of pregnancy.

He then celebrated his fifth marriage, with a lady named Messalina; with whom it happened to be her fifth marriage also. Her last husband was Atticus Vestinus, whom Nero put to death in order to obtain possession of his wife. But he soon divorced her, yet that did not break her heart, for she outlived him, and preserved her beauty to captivate the fancy of another emperor, in future years.

Nero was married the sixth time to a boy. His name was Sporus. Nero fancied that his beauty resembled that of his slain Poppæa, whose death he repented and bewailed. He caused Sporus to be made a eunuch, and exhausted the powers of art in trying to make him a woman. He then espoused him, with the most solemn forms of marriage; and it was cleverly remarked by the people, that it was a great pity that his father Domitius had not had such a wife.

His seventh and last marriage was to Dorypho-rus, his own freedman; but in this case Nero him-

self was the bride, and his manumitted slave the groom. Nero was a musician and a comedian, and was accustomed to spend a great part of his time in rehearsal and in public performance, as an actor. He chose the crowded theatre as the place in which to celebrate this marriage. He first covered himself with the skin of a wild beast, and in that dress, before thousands of assembled men and women, committed rape upon persons of both sexes, who were tied to stakes for that purpose. Having thus demonstrated his manhood, he appeared as the bride in his marriage to Doryphorus, to whom he was married in the same solemn form that Sporus had been married to him; finishing the representation by consummating the marriage in the embraces of Doryphorus, himself imitating the cries and shrieks of young virgins when they are ravished.

Nero died by his own hand, A.D. 68, in the thirty-first year of his age, and the fourteenth of his imperial power. He left no child, either by birth or by adoption. He was the last of the Cæsars. That name was henceforth only an honorary title. Can anyone regret the extinction of the dissolute and degenerate race? Is it not a happy provision in the laws of God, that "monsters cannot propagate"?

Such was monogamy at the commencement of the Christian era; for it was during the reign of Augustus that Christ was born, and during that of

Nero that Paul was beheaded. Such was the social system imposed by Rome upon the nations of Europe. This is no fancy sketch, nor have the facts here cited been herein exaggerated. My authorities are accessible to every scholar, and I invite criticism and investigation. The question now arises, How was Roman monogamy affected by its contact with Christianity? And this question I shall proceed to discuss in another chapter.

# Chapter V

# INFLUENCE OF CHRISTIANITY

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### *Paganism and the First Christians*

The introduction of Christianity effected no violent revolutions of any kind in the social relations of men and women, except by purifying these relations, and enforcing the duties dependent upon them. Chrstianity did not dictate any particular form of government, or any code of laws, but enjoined obedience to the existing laws, when they were not inconsistent with the laws of the gospel. The first Christians, while they were themselves scarcely tolerated, were not inclined to attempt a social revolution by opposing the established system of monogamy; but they attempted to oppose only its vices, and to remove them. They insisted, from the first, upon purity and chastity in men and women equally. They denounced prostitution, adultery, and frequent and capricious divorces, and did what they could to eradicate their practice. But before they attained any degree of civil or

religious freedom, or were in any situation to introduce the purer system of polygamy, they had themselves become thoroughly Romanized; and the errors of Gnosticism, Platonism, and Montanism had then prevailed so extensively as to impel them, at last, to attempt a social reformation in a direction quite contrary to polygamy, by discouraging marriage, and by introducing asceticism, monasticism, and celibacy.

## *Gnosticism in the First Century*

Christianity was not fully tolerated in Europe till the time of Emperor Constantine the Great, in the former part of the fourth century; and was not established by law as the religion of Rome, till the reign of Theodosius, in the very last part of that century; while Gnosticism and its cognate errors began to be disseminated even in the first century, in apostolic times: they prevailed extensively in the second century, and had permanently corrupted the church in the third and fourth. While the different Gnostic writers and teachers differed greatly from one another on many points of belief, they were generally agreed in their fundamental doctrines, which sprang from the ancient Persian or Magian system of religion, and which taught the existence of two eternal beings,—Ormuzd, or God, the author of good, and the creator of light, which is his emblem; and Ahriman, or the

Devil, the author of evil, and the creator of darkness, his emblem. They believed that the world consisted of spirit and of matter, both being eternal; the latter, essentially evil, formed or molded by the Devil from the eternal substance of chaos, and the former essentially good, proceeding out of God, and still forming a part of God: hence, that the body is vile, wicked, and dark; while the soul is pure, holy, and light. The body, therefore, with its appetites and passions, should be despised and subdued; while the soul, with its superior attributes, should be cherished and obeyed. The principal Gnostic teachers of the first century were Simon Magus, Menander, and Cerinthus. They all studied at Alexandria, and all became Christians. Cerinthus taught that the man Jesus was born of Joseph and Mary in the natural way; that the Christ descended on him at his baptism, in the form of a dove; and, previous to the crucifixion, that the Christ returned to God, leaving the man to suffer on the cross.

## *Platonism of the Second Century*

In the second century, the Gnostic Christians became much more numerous and influential. Among the writers and teachers whom historians particularly mention were Saturninus, Basilides, Carpocrates, Valentine, Bardesanes, Tatian, Marcion, Montanus, Tertullian, and Origen. Saturninus

(A.D. 115) taught that Satan, the ruler of matter, was coeval with the Deity; that the world was created by seven angels, without the knowledge of the Deity, who, however, was not displeased when he saw it, and breathed into man a rational soul. Satan, enraged at the creation of the world and the virtue of its inhabitants, formed another race of men out of matter, with malignant souls like his own; and hence arose the great moral difference to be observed among men. The moral discipline of Saturninus was ascetic and severe: he discouraged marriage, declaring it to be the doctrine of the Devil; he enjoined abstinence from wine and flesh, and taught to keep under the body, as being formed from matter, which is in its essence evil and corrupt. Bardesanes wrote about A.D. 170, in the time of the Emperor Marcus Aurelius. "His moral system was ascetic in the extreme; he enjoined his disciples to renounce wedlock, abstain from animal food, and live in solitude on the slightest and most meagre diet, and even to use water instead of wine in the Lord's Supper." Montanus (A.D. 175) insisted upon more frequent and more rigorous fasts than had yet prevailed in the church, for they had hitherto fasted only during the passion-week; he forbade second marriages; taught the absolute and irrevocable excommunication of adulterers, murderers, and idolaters; required all chaste women to wear veils; and forbade all kinds of costly attire and ornaments of the per-

son. His most distinguished disciple was Tertullian, Bishop of Carthage, a very learned and voluminous writer, whose works have been considered in the greatest esteem in every age. Origen, a still more learned and more voluminous writer, and a very eloquent preacher, embraced the Gnostic errors when a young man, and carried his principles of subduing the passions of the body to such an extent, that he made a eunuch of himself: but in after-life, when he had spent many years in studying, translating, and expounding the Holy Scriptures, and understood them better, he regretted the rash act of his youth, and greatly modified his Gnostic sentiments; so much so, that many have accused him of teaching different views of the same subject, and of contradicting himself.

The first Platonic philosopher who joined the Christians was Justin Martyr, who was beheaded at Rome, A. D. 155; followed by Clement of Alexandria, A.D. 192, who had a school in that city called the Catechetic School, which attempted to harmonize the philosophy of Plato with the materialism of the Gnostics by means of the common medium of Christianity. This scheme was called the New Platonism; and a long contest prevailed between the followers of this system and the advocates of gospel simplicity. But the victory appeared to be on the side of the Platonists, which assured the lasting corruption of Christianity; for learned Christians now began to maintain that the

Scriptures have a double meaning; one literal and plain, and the other latent and symbolic: the literal or exoteric sense to be taught to the people, and the latent or esoteric sense to be communicated only to the initiated and the faithful. A similar distinction in morals followed. There was one rule for the multitude, and another for the aspirants to higher sanctity. These were to seek retirement and to mortify the flesh, avoiding marriage and all indulgence of the senses. Hence originated the austerities of religious hermits; hence the celibacy of priests, monks, and nuns.

## *Monogamy in the Fourth Century*

At the council of Cæsarea, A.D. 314, it was decided and decreed, in the first canon, that, if a priest should marry after his ordination, he must be deposed from office. The seventh canon forbids a priest to be present at the marriage of a bigamist.

At the council of Ancyra, in the same year, it was ordered, in the tenth canon, that those deacons who expressed their intention to marry at the time of their ordination might innocently do so; but, if they should marry without having expressed such intention, they must be deposed from office.

At the first council of Carthage, A.D. 348, by the second canon, it was ordered that all Christians who had violated their vows of virginity by subsequent marriage should be excommunicated; and, if

they were priests, they should be deposed from office.

Siricius, Bishop of Rome, in 385 ordered that every priest and every deacon within his diocese who should marry a second wife, or a widow, should be deposed from office.

While these Gnostic and Platonic sentiments were at work corrupting the church within, the state of social life without the pale of Christianity was much the same as it has been described under the first six Cæsars; or, if the testimony of all the contemporary writers can be believed, it was becoming more and more corrupt. The Christians formed but a small minority of the whole population, and they were generally hated, and often persecuted. It is scarcely possible for us to conceive of any greater depravity than that of the age of Caligula and Nero; and we do not wonder to learn that in the succeeding century the once mighty Roman empire was beginning to totter to its fall. But before it fell, it was destined to be upheld a while by the fortitude of Christian patriots; and, in turn, the purity of Christianity was to become more and more sullied by its long contact with Roman depravity, and its intimate complicity with Roman monogamy.

## *Constantine and Theodosius*

In the former part of the fourth century, the two joint emperors were Constantine and Licinius.

They agreed, at first, to tolerate Christianity; but Licinius violated his agreement, and commenced a persecution. Then Constantine, who had himself been a pagan hitherto, resolved to favor the Christians more than he had done already, and thus attach to himself the most industrious and peaceable citizens, and the most brave and loyal soldiers of the empire. In the year A.D. 324, the cross appeared for the first time upon his banners; his rival was defeated, and he became sole emperor. Then Constantine issued circular letters, announcing his conversion to Christianity, and inviting the people to follow his example. This call of the powerful monarch was not unheeded. The Christian faith spread rapidly: ministers of religion thronged the royal court, and offices of honor and profit were conferred upon Christians. Yet Constantine himself, through all his subsequent life, was only a catechumen or inquirer, and was not baptized, and received into full membership in the church, until he was near his end. And, in the meantime, he left the ancient system of the Roman state undisturbed; and paganism, with its corrupt monogamy, was still the law of the land. At length Theodosius, his grandson, required the Senate, a majority of whom had hitherto remained pagans, to choose between the two religions; and they were finally induced to vote in accordance with his wishes, in favor of Christianity. He soon (A.D. 392) published a severe edict against paganism;

and "then pretended conversions became numerous, the temples were deserted, and the churches filled with worshippers, and the religion under which Rome flourished for twelve centuries ceased forever."

## *Asceticism and Monasticism*

And then at length, when Christianity became paramount in the State, a permanent and decided social reform might have been possible, had they tolerated polygamy, as the first Christians had done in Judæa and other Asiatic countries; for they would thus have made it possible for all to be married that wished to marry, and thus have guarded themselves from the terrible licentiousness of the pagans, by the influences of which they were surrounded on every hand. But, on the contrary, impelled by the prevailing influences of Gnosticism, they not only retained their former monogamy, but they made it more strict and ascetic than before, and attempted an impossible reform by suppressing the amorous propensities, and vainly endeavoring to eradicate them. The bishops and doctors of the church had already done what they could to discourage marriage, and bring it into disrepute, especially with the ministers of religion; but now they forbade it to them altogether.

At the council of Toledo, A.D. 400, it was or-

dered, by canon seventeenth, that every Christian that had both a wife and a concubine should be excommunicated; but he should not be excommunicated who had only a concubine without a wife.

At the fourth council of Carthage, A.D. 401, it was ordered by canon seventieth, that all bishops, priests, and deacons, who had wives, must repudiate them, and live in celibacy, under penalty of deposition from office.

Pope Innocent I, about A.D. 412, in his official letter to the two bishops of Abruzzo, orders them to depose those priests who had been guilty of the crime of having children since their ordination.

Thus the seeds of Gnostic error, that had been sown in the church during the former periods of its history, now sprang up anew, and bore a plentiful harvest. "Nothing," says Keightley, "is more characteristic of the corruption which Christianity had undergone than the high honor in which the various classes of ascetics were held. These useless or pernicious beings now were actually swarming throughout the Eastern empire, and were gradually spreading themselves into the West. We have shown how asceticism has been derived from the sultry regions of Asia, and how it originates in the Gnostic principles. It had long been insinuating itself into the church; but, after the establishment of Christianity, it burst forth like a torrent." "The hope of acquiring heaven by virginity and mortification was not confined to the male sex: woman,

with the enthusiasm and the devotional tendency peculiar to her, rushed eagerly towards the crown of glory. Nunneries became numerous, and were thronged with inmates. Nature, however, not infrequently asserted her rights; and the complaints and admonitions of the most celebrated fathers assure us that the unnatural state of vowed celibacy was productive of the same evils and scandals in ancient as in modern times."

## *Mediæval Superstition and Immorality*

"And then," says the learned ecclesiastical historian, Mosheim, "the number of immoral and unworthy Christians began so to increase, that the examples of real piety and virtue became extremely rare. When the terrors of persecution were totally dispelled; when the church, secured from the efforts of its enemies, enjoyed the sweets of prosperity and peace; when the major part of its bishops exhibited to their flocks the contagious examples of arrogance, luxury, effeminacy, animosity, and strife, with other vices too numerous to mention; when multitudes were drawn into the profession of Christianity, not by the power of conviction and argument, but by the prospect of gain or by the fear of punishment,—then it was indeed no wonder that the church was contaminated with shoals of profligate Christians, and that the virtuous few were, in a manner, oppressed and over-

whelmed by the superior numbers of the wicked and licentious." "Nor did the evil end here; for those vain fictions, which an attachment to the Platonic philosophy and to popular opinions had engaged the greatest part of the Christian doctors to adopt before the time of Constantine, were now confirmed, enlarged, and embellished in various ways. Hence arose the extravagant veneration for departed saints, the celibacy of priests, the worship of images and relics, which, in process of time, almost totally destroyed the Christian religion, or at least eclipsed its lustre, and corrupted its essence." "A preposterous desire of imitating the pagan rites, and of blending them with the Christian worship, and that idle propensity which the generality of mankind have towards a gaudy and ostentatious religion, all combined to establish the reign of superstition on the ruins of Christianity. Accordingly, frequent pilgrimages were undertaken to Palestine and to the tombs of the martyrs, as if there alone the sacred principles of virtue and the certain hope of salvation were to be acquired. The public processions and supplications, by which the pagans endeavored to appease their gods, were now adopted into the Christian worship, and celebrated with great pomp and magnificence. The virtues that had formerly been ascribed to the heathen temples, to their lustrations, to the statues of their gods and heroes, were now attributed to the Christian churches, to water consecrated by cer-

tain forms of prayer, to the images of holy men; and the worship of the martyrs was modeled according to the religious services that were paid to the gods before the coming of Christ."

Similar testimonies could easily be cited from Gibbon's "Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire," from D'Aubigne's "History of the Reformation," from the ancient works of Eusebius, and the modern ones of Neander, and from hundreds of others; but I will not weary my reader with them. Thus it appears from the testimonies of all the historians, ecclesiastical and civil, sacred and profane, that the doctrines and practices which distinguish the Roman-Catholic Church to-day were most of them derived from a very early age, anterior to the civil acknowledgment and legal establishment of Christianity. Keightley says, "The Church of Rome is, in fact, very unjustly treated when she is charged with being the author of the tenets and practices which were transmitted to her from the fourth century. Her guilt or error was not that of invention, but of retention."

## *Some Results of Clerical Celibacy*

Her boasted claim of immutability is well sustained, as far back, certainly, as the commencement of the fifth century. The Western empire survived till the close of that century; and as the power of the emperors continued to decline, that

of the bishops of Rome, who were afterwards called popes, continued to increase, till at length they attained monarchical as well as hierarchical power, and governed the religious and the social affairs of the European world. And as the dogmas of the Roman Church are now maintaining monogamy with many of its attendant vices, and are now prohibiting marriage to its clergy, and discouraging it in all its more earnest religious devotees, of both sexes, so they always have done. And we have the testimonies of all modern historians, all modern travelers, and of modern statistics, that the vices of old Rome that then attended its social system of monogamy are still the vices of modern Rome, and of all the countries under the sway of the Roman Church; the most recent statistics of the Catholic countries of Europe giving the number of illegitimate children born there each year, as greater than the number of those of legitimate birth.

Indeed it is not only on the corrupt soil of old Europe that the licentiousness of ancient Roman monogamy still prevails, but also in the Catholic countries of new America. In proof of this, I will cite only one testimony, where thousands might be cited, from a work entitled "What I saw in South and North America." By H. W. Baxley, M.D., Special Commissioner of the United States Government. This is his description of "what he saw" in Lima, the capital of Peru:—

"It is rarely the case that one walks in any part of the city, during the day or night, without being shocked by sights of indecency, immodesty, and immorality, too gross even to be hinted at, and disgraceful to the arrogant civilization of the nation. If one thousand seven hundred and ninety-three priests, exercising ecclesiastical authority and performing religious functions in this city, as published in its statistics, with seventy churches, forty-two chapels, six hundred and twenty-eight altars, and vast power of influence and enforcement, cannot produce a better state of morals and manners, it shows either a defective system of religion, or incapacity and faithlessness on the part of the executors of the holy trust. The statements of candid citizens and of foreign residents of many years compel the belief, that the general demoralization is mainly due to a depraved clergy. If priests taking vows of chastity and devotion alone to God, perjure themselves, obey the lusts of the flesh, and scatter their illegitimate offspring abroad, it is to be expected that they will find imitators among those whose temporal purity they should guard, and whose eternal welfare they should promote. The unblushing boldness with which clerical debauchery stalks abroad in Lima renders it needless to put in any saving clause of declaration. The priest may be seen on the sabbath day, as on others, in bull-ring and cock-pit, restaurant and tavern, with commoner and concubine, joining in noisy

revel, or looking on with complacent sanction. Nor does the going-down of the sun arrest his wayward peregrinations; for he may be seen at that hour, at corners, with *tapadas*, in gay and lascivious conversation, or threading by-ways in fulfilment of a lustful assignation. If the bishop of Arequipas will turn to the 'weak and beggarly elements of the world,' if he cannot, like his great predecessor St. Paul, 'contain,' but must obey the carnal desires, 'let him marry,' as he is commanded by the apostle, like an honorable man and a consistent Christian; and let him not encourage the frailty of depraved disciples by a shameless example of licentiousness made public by his procurement of separate apartments in Lima for his seven concubines and his thirty-five illegitimate children.

"The streets of this capital were yesterday the scene of a procession which was a disgrace to its professed enlightenment, and an idolatrous violation of its boasted Christianity. A gorgeously gilded throne, borne on the shoulders of negroes who were partially concealed by a deep valance, supported the pontifically-attired effigy of St. Peter; its right arm, moved by secret machinery, being occasionally raised in attitude of blessing the throngs of deluded worshippers who bowed their heads for its benediction. Another similarly decorated dais bore a life-size graven image of La Merced, the patron saint of Peru; elegantly arrayed in curls, coronet, richly-embroidered crinoline and

robe, pearl necklace and ear-rings, brooch and bodice; and holding in its uplifted jewelled fingers a silver *yoke*. These effigies were escorted by prelates and other ecclesiastics; and that of La Merced was preceded by six pert-looking mulatto girls,—designed to represent virgins,—carrying incense upon silver salvers, from which numerous censers, swung by priestly hands, were kept supplied, and rolled upward their clouds of perfume, to tell of the adoration of her votaries. The whole procession moved to the sound of measured chants sung by hundreds of the clergy, who often bowed; behind whom followed the civic dignitaries of the nation and city, bareheaded and reverential; and after these came the plumed warriors, on horse and foot, with breastplate and helmet, lance, sabre, musket, and cannon, flaunting banners, and martial music, guarding the saints through the city, and back to the altars of the Church of La Merced, whence they came, and where they will receive hereafter, as heretofore, the petitions and vows of thousands of misguided religionists. Can popular regeneration be rationally looked for when examples of ecclesiastical profligacy are patent to the public eye, and when such violations of divine precepts are practised, and such delusions devised to mislead the ignorant?

"No one can scrutinize the social habits in Lima, without becoming sensible of the fact that women are probably 'more sinned against than sinning.'

For they not only have provocations to faithlessness, and opportunity afforded for its indulgence by sanctioned customs, but they are taught by the universally-recognized dissoluteness of the men not to place any confidence in them, and not to contemplate marriage as a means of happiness beyond its power to furnish an establishment, and make a woman mistress of her own actions.

"In the street called San Francisco, opposite the monastery of that name, a kind of barracks is found, containing quite a population apart from the rest. There lives a class of women and children whom one would think came in a direct line from the gypsies, if their complexion did not show a variety of a thousand shades, from white to black. These women are the acknowledged mistresses, and the children the progeny, of the monks, who visit them at all times, and pay them a regular stipend. 'La casa de la monjas,'—the house of the nuns,—as the people ironically call it, is a real Gomorrah. The clerical protectors of the tenants that inhabit it willingly mistake the chambers, not having the weakness of the laity of being jealous of each other. Do not suppose that we are amusing ourselves in speaking ill of the monks of Lima. These abominations among themselves they are the first to expose; for in their stated elections for superiors, such is the bitterness of rival aspirants, that they publicly charge against each other these infamous transactions, making known the number

of their concubines and illegitimate children."

Thus have Dr. Baxley and others cast the principal reproach of this frightful immorality upon the poor priests; but does it not belong rather to their entire social system? The priests in assuming the vows of perpetual celibacy, and the people in supporting the old Roman monogamy, which their Gnostic views of Christianity required, have assumed more than human nature is able to bear, and more than it ought to bear; and there must be constant transgression and immorality as long as their present system prevails.

And now I think I have fairly demonstrated that the European social system of monogamy had its origin in Roman paganism, and has been perpetuated by Roman Catholicism.

# Chapter VI

# MONOGAMY AMONG PROTESTANTS

## VI. MONOGAMY AMONG PROTESTANTS

### *Monogamy is Romanism Still*

TAKE monogamy as it is to-day, in Protestant countries, and we see that the old Roman leaven is still in it. Christianity has not reformed and purified that system so much as that has corrupted Christianity. Most of us in these countries are accustomed to congratulate ourselves upon our happy escape from the bondage and the bigotry of the Papal Church. But we are mistaken. We have not escaped. Rome binds us in stronger shackles than the iron chains of the holy Inquisition. Her shackles are upon our consciences, they are intertwined with every fibre of our social life. Much of her intolerant spirit, many of her questionable doctrines and practices, and her traditional forms and ceremonies, are still common to the nominally Christian world. In respect to a few of them, we have discovered that they are unscriptural, and

unsupported by divine authority, and are therefore of no binding obligation; but, by many other traditional doctrines and practices of that hierarchy, we are unconsciously, and therefore so much the more securely fettered.

We boast of our Christian freedom, while we are, in fact, but little better than slaves; for if we are nominally free, yet we are bound by an apprenticeship to Rome more degrading than our former slavery itself: and our boasted emancipation is but a miserable farce. We are too servile and timid in our interpretation of the Bible, and in our examination of the divine and natural laws. We hesitate to follow the simple truth to its legitimate and logical conclusions. We stand aghast at the radical changes which severe truth requires in our religious and social systems. We shrink from exploring the profound labyrinths to which truth attempts in vain to lead us; while we look anxiously around for clews and leading-strings by which to trace our way. We dare not go forward without example and authority; and authority and example are reconducting us to Rome.

Our great champion, Dr. Martin Luther, made a few bold steps in the right direction, but stopped far short of the ultimate results to which his own principles were leading. A Protestant in theory, he was, in practice, essentially a Romanist. He insisted much upon justification by faith alone, and declared personal piety to be necessary to true

Christianity; and yet he admitted all citizens, irrespective of their faith or their want of it, to the most solemn and most esoteric ordinances of the Christian Church. He repudiated the authority of earthly potentates to compel men's Christian belief, but retained the union of Church and State in order to compel their Christian obedience. He denied the infallibility of the pope, and the miraculous power of the priesthood, and yet believed in the Real Presence, if not the adoration, of the host. His disciples are to-day imitating his example rather than promoting his principles, and possess little more evangelical faith than the Romanists themselves.

Henry the Eighth, the founder of the Church of England, was even less a Protestant than Luther; and the present tendency of many of the most influential doctors and dignitaries of this Church is in the same retrograde direction as that of the Lutherans. Yet these two churches, the Anglican and the Lutheran, are the main pillars of Protestantism,—the Boaz and Jachin of the porch of the new temple. I have not lost my hope that the truth of gospel simplicity will ultimately prevail over ecclesiastical bigotry; but it may require as many centuries for the Christian world to unlock the trammels of the Roman hierarchy, and to escape from its thraldom, as it originally required to fix those trammels upon the consciences of Christian freemen.

But the Romans are more consistent in their system of monogamy than we are; for while the dogmas of the church forbid polygamy, and even single marriages to the ministry, they provide for the surplus women, by having numerous societies of nuns and sisters of charity, who make a merit of necessity, by assuming the vows of perpetual celibacy, to serve the Church, and acquire religious merit. As Protestants, we have been taught to believe that these monastic institutions have proved to be schools of vice, and that the vows of perpetual chastity assumed in them are unnatural and wicked, and that they are often violated under the detestable hypocricy of sacerdotal sanctity.*

* "Only light reference will be made in this place to the darker scandals by which the abbeys were dishonored. Such things there really were, to an extent which it may be painful to believe, but which evidence too abundantly proves." Froudes History of England, vol ii, chap. 10.

Among other specifications, Mr. Froude cites the letter of the Archbishop of Canterbury (written A.D. 1489) to the Abbot of St. Albans, wherein he accuses him thus: "Not a few of your fellow-monks and brethren, as we most deeply grieve to learn, giving themselves over to a reprobate mind, laying aside the fear of God, do lead only a life of lasciviousness,—nay, as is horrible to relate, be not afraid to defile the holy places, even the very churches of God, by infamous intercourse with nuns. You yourself, moreover, among other grave enormities and abominable crimes whereof you are guilty, and for which you are noted and diffamed, have, in the first place, admitted a certain married woman named Elena Germyn, who has separated herself, without just cause, from her husband, and for some time past has lived in adultery with another man, to be a nun, or sister in the Priory of Bray; and . . . Father Thomas Sudbury, one of your brother-monks, publicly, notoriously, and without inter-

For these reasons, we have suppressed the nunneries; but we have made no provision for the nuns, and those who would have become nuns. In those institutions they were, at least, assured of a home and a support, even if they did learn vice; but now, when thrown upon the world, they are still more exposed to vice, and are without a home and without support.

Under Catholic monogamy, if a young woman made a false step, she could hide her shame in a convent, and devote her future life to penitence and prayer; but, under Protestant monogamy, the frail fair sinner has no such refuge. Her first lapse from virtue shuts her out forever from the respect and sympathy of the world, and from the hope of

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ference or punishment from you, has associated and still associates with this woman, as an adulterer with his harlot. Moreover, divers others of your brethren and fellow-monks have resorted and do resort continually to her and other women at the same place, as to a public brothel or receiving house. Nor is Bray the only house into which you have introduced disorder. At the Nunnery of Sapwell, you depose those who are good and religious, you promote to the highest dignities the worthless and the vicious."

In the year 1536, the Report of Special Commissioners appointed to inspect the Monasteries of England was laid before Parliament, by which it appeared, says Mr. Froude, that "two-thirds of the monks in England were living in habits which may not be described. . . . The case against the monasteries was complete; and there is no occasion either to be surprised or peculiarly horrified at the discovery. The demoralization which was exposed was nothing less and nothing more than the condition into which men of average nature compelled to celibacy, and living as the exponents of a system which they disbelieved were certain to fall."

future reformation; and her downward career to the gates of hell is so generally taken for granted, that it becomes almost a certainty. The only safe and proper provision for homeless women is marriage. An early marriage will usually save them from dangers to which they are exposed. Monogamy cannot secure their marriage; but polygamy can: yet we are taught to look with horror upon polygamy as one of the "relics of barbarism," although it is plainly taught in the Bible, and is the only social system which provides marriage for all, and which secures the honest and lawful gratification of those impetous passions which must be and which will be indulged in some manner, if not by marriage, then without it; while we wink at all the disgusting abominations of prostitution, divorce, adultery, and other vices, which are the well-known and the inevitable results of restricted marriage. Monogamy, in "forbidding to marry," assumes all the curses which this prohibition entails. We must choose between the system which provides marriage for all, with comparative purity, or the system of restricted marriage with inevitable impurity.

## *Impurity of Modern Monogamy*

The Bible forbids prostitution, but permits polygamy. The ancient Greeks and Romans forbade polygamy, but permitted prostitution. Modern monogamy pretends to forbid both, but really per-

mits prostitution also. Our monogamous morality is, therefore, that of ancient paganism, and not that of the Bible; and prostitution is as much a necessary part of our social system as it was of that at Athens, at Corinth, or at Rome. Our magistrates are not ignorant of the extent of public licentiousness; but they do not attempt to suppress it. They only seek to conceal it, and confine it, if possible, within its present limits, requiring its votaries to keep it in the dark. Our police-officers know almost every prostitute that walks the street, and allow her to ply her nefarious trade unmolested, so long as she is polite and unobtrusive. As the Spartans are reputed to have said to the youth of their state, in respect to theft, "*Steal, but do not be caught at it,*" so the guardians of our public morals say, "You may be as licentious as you please, only make no public display of your immorality." The reason of this connivance at prostitution must be because our legislators and judges believe its suppression to be impossible, and, with our system of monogamy, it is impossible. If there must be a multitude of women unmarried and unprovided for, there will be a multitude of prostitutes; and, if there are a multitude of prostitutes, there will be a multitude of men, who, like Shakespeare's Falstaff, will decline marriage, because they can be "better accommodated than with a wife:" and so the evil will go on continually increasing and propagating itself.

The Foundling Hospital, the Five Points House of Industry, and the Home for Friendless and Abandoned Women, must be built alongside of the brothel; and their numerous inmates must be maintained either by public tax or by Christian charity (most frequently by the latter): so that honest men must support their own wives and children and also the cast-off drabs and bastards of unprincipled libertines.

## *Prostitutes Should be Publicly Licensed*

If we must have public prostitutes, let us have them openly and boldly, as the ancient Greeks and Romans did; and let them be publicly licensed, as they were under Caligula, and as they are said to be still in France; and let the state derive, at least, sufficient revenue from them to bury their murdered infants, and to bring up their abandoned foundlings.

Let me not be misunderstood in what I have just said. I do not deprecate that form of charity which seeks out the victims of licentiousness, and makes them the special objects of its beneficence. I would not say one word in its disparagement. On the contrary, I acknowledge its genuineness. Such charity is worthy of great commendation; it is in a special sense true Christian charity, for it is eminently Christ-like; since he came to seek and to save the lost, and disdained not to be called the Friend of publicans and sinners. But what I

demand is this, that this form of Christian charity should so expand its efforts and its aims as fully to meet the case, and yield a permanent and radical relief to that class of the poor and miserable which it has taken under its charge. Let its aims be so comprehensive, so high, so broad, and so deep, that it cannot be satisfied with anything less than a prevention of the "social evil" which it has hitherto attempted only to alleviate. And it is certainly no slander to our present charities of this kind, to say that the alleviation which they have effected is altogether inadequate. The miserable victims of this vice are increasing faster than the ability or the disposition to relieve them. The most enthusiastic philanthropists have already become disheartened in vainly endeavoring to furnish sufficient relief, and they can see no means of prevention. They are at their wits' end; and some of them have become fully aware that, under our present social system, no prevention can be possible. "While sin is in the world," some say, "we cannot prevent men and women from sinning: they will sin, in spite of us and in spite of everything; and the world itself is growing more and more depraved and wicked every day. All that we can do is to show Christian mercy, and grant some present relief."

But the true Christian philanthropist does not rest satisfied in such conclusions. He knows that it is not true that the world is growing worse and

worse, but that facts and statistics prove the contrary. He believes in the "good time coming," and that the world is actually growing better and better. Many causes of human misery have been discovered and removed, or greatly diminished, and he hopes that more will be. The average duration of human life is actually being prolonged. The average state of health is incontestably being improved. Christianity has not been instituted in vain. It has already accomplished wonders of mercy and grace, and its blessed work of reform is still going on. The true philanthropist, therefore, must not and will not despair. If no preventive of licentiousness has hitherto been found, and if it be impossible to find any under our present social system of marriage, we must look for it under some other system. Marriage was made for man, and not man for marriage.

## *Is the Social Evil Preventible?*

But perhaps some may suppose that sincere and genuine piety is a sufficient preventive of licentiousness, and that, when all the people become truly converted, and well instructed in religious knowledge, then they will be secure from this vice. I have great confidence in genuine piety, and believe that it is indeed the best antidote for all the ills that flesh is heir to; but the difficulty is, that it is this very licentiousness which is hindering people from becoming pious. And, besides this,

it is not from want of religious knowledge that people become licentious: they have already had line upon line, and precept upon precept, for many successive generations. They know that licentiousness is a sin; and they know that, when they fall into it, they become liable to the most fearful punishments, both in this life and in the world to come: but the tyranny of monogamy has left them no alternative; they have no other available means of gratifying the wants of nature. Marriage is impossible to half the women, and a single marriage is inadequate to the requirements of half the men. Pious exhortation is but idle talk to those who are sinning from the excitement of amorous desire of which there is no possible gratification except a sinful one. If the philanthropist who is giving them these exhortations cannot point out a lawful means of meeting those natural wants, of what profit can his exhortations be? "If a brother or a sister be naked, and destitute of daily food, and one of you say unto them, Depart in peace, be ye warmed and filled; notwithstanding ye give them not those things which are needful to the body; what doth it profit?" It is not instruction which our "destitute and abandoned women" want; they want marriage; they want homes of their own to shelter them, and husbands to love them and to provide for them. And I have already demonstrated that it is their right to have them; their natural and unquestionable right, of which the

injustice and tyranny of monogamy has cruelly deprived them. Society has wronged them; and with their own peculiar, intuitive instinct they feel it, though they cannot tell exactly how. Society, somehow, has made war upon them, most unjustly; and, when they become licentious, it is from an instinctive feeling of self-defence: it is only to take such justifiable revenge upon society as a state of warfare authorizes, and has, in a manner, rendered necessary.

Now, let this warfare cease. Let the women have their rights. Let every woman have a husband and a home; and let every man have as many women as he can love and as can love him, and as he is able to support, until all the women are provided for: then, and not till then, will prostitution cease; and then the happy time that the poet dreamed of, when he put the apparently extravagant sentiment into his hero's mouth, will have come at last, and

"There shall be no more widows in the land."*

* "No man who loves his kind can in these days rest content with waiting as a servant upon human misery, when it is in so many cases possible to anticipate and avert it. Prevention is better than cure; and it is now clear to all that a large part of human suffering is preventible by improved social arrangements. Charity will now, if it be genuine, fix upon this enterprise as greater, more widely and permanently beneficial, and therefore more Christian, than the other. It will not, indeed, neglect the lower task of relieving and consoling those, who, whether through the errors and unskilful arrangements of society, or through causes not yet preventible, have actually fallen into calamity. Its com-

## *Monogamy the Cause of Seduction*

If any of my readers have failed to see that there is any necessary connection between monogamy

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passion will be all the deeper, its relief more prompt and zealous, because it does not generally, as former generations did, recognize such calamities to be part of man's inevitable destiny. When the sick man has been visited, and everything done which skill and assiduity can do to cure him, modern charity will go on to consider the causes of his malady, and then to inquire whether others incur the same dangers, and may be warned in time. When the starving man has been relieved, modern charity inquires whether any fault in the social system deprived him of his share of Nature's bounty, any unjust advantage taken by the strong over the weak, any rudeness or want of culture in himself, wrecking his virtue and his habits of thrift." [I continue this quotation with a reservation; applying it to the first *Roman* Christians, but doubting its truthfulness in respect to the "apostolic," Jewish Christians.]

"The first Christians were probably not so much hopeless of accomplishing great social reforms, as unripe for the conception of them. They did not easily recognize evil to be evil, and did not believe, or rather had never dreamed, that it could be cured. Habit dulls the senses, and puts the critical faculty to sleep. The fierceness and hardness of ancient manners, is apparent to us; but the ancients themselves were not shocked by sights which were familiar to them. To us it is sickening to think of the gladiatorial show, of the massacres common in Roman warfare, of the infanticide practised by grave and respectable citizens, who did not merely condemn their children to death, but often in practice, as they well knew to what was still worse,—a life of prostitution and beggary. The Roman regarded a gladiatorial show as we regard a hunt; the news of the slaughter of two hundred thousand Helvetians by Cæsar, or half a million Jews by Titus, excited in his mind a thrill of triumph; infanticide committed by a friend appeared to him a prudent measure of household economy. To shake off this paralysis of the moral sense produced by habit, to see misery to be misery, and cruelty to be cruelty, requires not merely

and female ruin, I beg them to examine carefully the following observations. It has been demonstrated, in a former chapter, that monogamy leaves a multitude of women unprotected, and unprovided with the privileges of marriage. It does not, and it cannot, furnish half of them with husbands and homes of their own; hence the galling bondage of female dependence; hence the difficulty of woman's finding her "sphere." Yet there is nothing mysterious or doubtful about what constitutes her sphere; for it is defined by the simple term "home,"—that word, above all others, so charm-

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a strong, but a trained and matured compassion. It was as much, probably, as the first Christian could learn at once, to relieve the sick, the starving, and the desolate. Only after centuries of this simple philanthropy could they learn to criticize the fundamental usages of society itself, and acquire courage to pronounce that, however deeply rooted and time-honored, they were in many cases shocking to humanity.

"Closely connected with this insensibility to the real character of common usages is a positive unwillingness to reform them. The argument of prejudice is twofold. It is not only that what has lasted a long time must be right, but also that what has lasted a long time, right or wrong, must be intended to continue. We are advanced by eighteen hundred years beyond the apostolic generation. Our minds are set free, so that we may boldly criticize the usages around us, knowing them to be but imperfect essays toward order and happiness, and no divinely or supernaturally ordained constitution which it would be impious to change. We have witnessed improvements in physical well-being which incline us to expect further progress, and make us keen-sighted to detect the evils and miseries that remain. Thus ought the enthusiasm of humanity to work in these days, and thus, plainly enough, it does work. These investigations are constantly being made, these reforms commenced."—Ecce Homo.

ing, and so suggestive of every excellence in the female character, and of all the sweet memories which cluster round the blessed names of mother, sister, and bride. But alas! the practical mystery with an immense number of women still remains; and that is, how to find a home. A father's house is no longer a home to many a young woman; perhaps that father is poor, and the burden of years is at last superadded to that of poverty. He cheerfully toiled for his child while she was young and necessarily dependent upon him; and, as she grew up to womanhood, he stinted not to bestow upon her such learning and such accomplishments as his scanty means could command; and his heart was often cheered by the hope of seeing her well married and well settled in life: but, as these hopes are not realized, he begins to feel the burden of her maintenance. "She is old enough to provide for herself," and "Why doesn't she get married?" Sure enough! poor thing, why doesn't she? But oh! how cruel to reproach her with her involuntary dependence and her miserable lot! And it is an immense relief to her, when it is at length decided that she must go out to service. And so she goes to toil for bread among strangers. Her frail form is overburdened, and often broken down, by unremitting and ill-requited labor, and her young heart not unfrequently corrupted and hardened by unavoidable contact and contamination with vice.

## *The Harlot's Progress*

What wonder is it, then, that, under such circumstances, the unprotected, wearied, homesick girl should yield a reluctant ear to the seductive flatteries of the profligate libertine, who scruples not to utter vows of constancy, and draw fond pictures of future affluence, to be shared with her; but who, having accomplished his fiendish purpose, and stolen from her, forever, her only dower of innocence and purity, now ignores his vows and promises, and casts her off, to seek and ruin another victim! What shall become of that poor, desolate, guilty, heart-broken wretch thus ruthlessly abandoned? Alas! the result is scarcely doubtful: it is too often experienced. Despised by herself no less than by the world, driven in anger from the paternal threshold, the gates of honest toil and the doors of Christian charity closed against her, she yields to hopeless despair, and, even for the miserable purpose of prolonging a wretched existence, she abandons herself at length to a life of open shame; becoming herself the means of propagating that misery of which she is such an unhappy victim.

The artificial system of monogamy offers up other sacrifices on the unholy altar of abandoned lust, besides those furnished from among the daughters of toil or the victims of seduction. The accomplished, the refined, the proud, and the

wealthy have furnished their full proportion to swell the aggregate number of the lost. We hope, of course, that much the larger portion of women who have been well brought up, and have failed to marry, have lived and died honest old maids. They never quite lost their hope. Poor, simple souls, they had always been told that their husbands would come for them by and by; that there is a Jack for every Gill, as many men as women in the world; and so they sat and waited. . . .

And thus the ceaseless tide of human life rolls on and on, the number of competitors among marriageable maids abates not, the number of men who are ready to marry augments not. Some, therefore, among the higher and the middling ranks of life, who ought to die old maids, according to the system of monogamy, do not so die. The very pride and spirit of accomplished women have sometimes proved their ruin. When they have discovered that real men are comparatively rare in the matrimonial market, and that there are more rakes and triflers than honest lovers in society, and that there cannot be husbands and homes provided for more than half the women,—being unable to suppress all their strong susceptibilities of love, and unwilling to surrender all their rights to its enjoyment,—they have deliberately determined to enjoy what they can without marriage; and thus to defy the scorn of men and the wrath of God.

But passion does not impel so great a num-

ber of intelligent women to self-abandonment, as a desire of self-support and a dread of being an intolerable burden to others. Under such apprehensions, many unhappy women, who had been nursed in the lap of luxury, and accustomed to every indulgence during childhood, have found, after coming of age, that as year after year passed round, and no eligible opportunity of marriage occurred, their presence at home was becoming more and more unwelcome, and their formidable bills of expenses more and more reluctantly allowed, till they have at last fled from those halls of wealth, and from an intolerable dependence on churlish relatives, to a still more wretched existence in the haunts of public vice.

How great is the injustice and oppression of the social system which makes no other provision for so many of its most beautiful and originally innocent daughters than this!

## *Human Nature Rebels Against Monogamy*

Monogamy being partial in its privileges, and oppressive in its prohibitions, like every other oppressive and unjust thing, provokes resentment and enmity and cannot be thoroughly maintained and honestly observed. Human nature is constantly rebelling against it, and is persistently asserting its inherent and inalienable right to all the benefits of love and marriage, of which this system

has deprived it. These struggles for freedom from the oppression of monogamy, being made in ignorance of the privileges of polygamy, have assumed the form of defiant transgression against the laws of chastity itself; for the popular conscience is so depraved by the erroneous educations of our social system, as to regard the restrictions of monogamy as identical with those of religion. And, finding them too hard to be borne, instead of resorting to the just and proper alternative of polygamy, many persons have broken away from all moral restraint whatever, have given loose rein to impetuous passion, and have become lost to every sentiment of virtue and to every hope of heaven.

As Christianity itself was outraged and repudiated at the period of the French Revolution, on account of the abuses of Roman Catholicism, with which the popular mind had confounded it (Romanism being the only acknowledged form of Christianity then known in that country, so that, when they rose against it, they rose against Christianity itself, and became raging demons of barbarity and crime), so now, throughout Europe and America, is chastity outraged and religion repudiated on account of the unjust restriction which monogamy has instituted in their names. But neither religion nor chastity is the real object of this hatred. All men sincerely respect the one and revere the other. Yet many cannot see how to assert their natural rights and achieve their long-

lost freedom without destroying both. Polygamy alone solves the problem how those rights can be enjoyed while chastity is preserved and religion maintained; for polygamy alone can honestly furnish sufficient indulgence of love to all the men, and sufficient protection of marriage to all the women. Monogamy says to half the women, "Ye cannot marry, and hence ye shall not love"; and to every man it says, "Thou canst marry but one woman, and one only shalt thou love," without regard to the condition of that woman, or her ability or inability to meet his conjugal wants.

It is a physical fact that women are not only less inclined to amorous passion than the men, at all times, but they are also subject to interruptions and periodical changes, which men do not experience. During the long period of lactation, or nursing, most women have a positive repugnance to the embraces of love, as well as during the progress of certain nervous chronic disorders peculiar to the sex, which are aggravated, if not caused, by frequent connubial intercourse; so much so, that some medical men insist upon entire separation from the marriage-bed during the continuance of these disorders, and also during the period of lactation. At such times, one would suppose that no civilized man, or at least that no Christian man, could be so brutal and so cruel as to force his wife to yield to his propensities against her own inclinations and in spite of her repeated and earnest remonstrances:

but nothing is more certain than that there are many thousands of just such Christian men; for what can the poor monogamist do? The healthful currents of vigorous life impel him to amorous desire; and he cannot afford to shut down the gates or to shut off the steam. To do so would involve immense loss of pleasure and of power. The passions furnish the only streams to turn the machinery of action; and love is the strongest of them all. While there is the hope of indulgence, machinery runs smoothly, and the whole man is full of life and buoyancy and power; but, if this master-passion must be repressed, its unnatural restraint absorbs all the remaining strength of the man, and he is no better than a hermit or a monk. Hence no vigorous man is willing to endure this restraint. Yet the Christian monogamist has been taught that it is both a sin and shame to look for the gratification of his desires away from home; so the poor heart-broken wife must submit to torture, and so the otherwise kind and honorable husband must commit violence upon his dearest friend, whom he has most solemnly promised to love and to cherish, in sickness and in health, till death shall part them. Many a poor wife then prays for death to part them soon. But other men, at such times, disdaining to avail themselves of extorted pleasures, which can afford so little satisfaction, and despising that religion which will justify or allow such cruel brutality, then steal away

from their unwilling wives, and, in defiance of the most solemn obligations and sacred laws of God and man, go and do worse; defiling the beds of virgin innocence, or wasting their health and strength upon vile prostitutes. Which horn of this trilemma should the vigorous husband of this invalid woman choose; imbecile continence, wicked licentiousness, or matrimonial brutality? Would not polygamy be an alternative preferable to either? would it not be more just and more merciful than either? It is just and merciful to both the men and the women; it preserves the marriage-bed undefiled; it provides husbands for all the women; and it allows each man to take more than one wife when circumstances warrant and require it. And they often do require it. The extraordinary vehemence and intensity of the amorous propensity which some men experience is sufficient of itself to require it. Such men can no more restrain this desire than that for their necessary food. They may call to their assistance every motive to continence that can be drawn from heaven and earth and hell, but they often call in vain; for the intensity of this passion sweeps down every barrier, and rushes to its gratification. If, then, there will be and there must be indulgence, let it be such as is regulated and controlled by divine and natural law. God who made man, and who knows what is in man, has provided sufficient means to supply his natural amorous wants. Marriage is that means;

and, as one wife is not always sufficient, he has provided more. There are women enough, and no man need be either pining or sinning for the want of them.

## *Great Men Are Always Polygamists*

And it is the brave, the gifted, the talented, that deserve the fair, who have always desired the fair, and won the fair. "Lovely Thais" never refuses to unveil her charms to the true hero. Great men always recognize the voice of God in the voice of Nature, no matter under what social system they may live. They yield to the natural and the divine behests, even though they transgress the laws of ordinary social life. They obey God rather than men; and this obedience is the first element of their greatness. Ordinary laws may be sufficient to restrain ordinary men; but when a Samson is within their bonds, those bonds are snapped asunder like the green withes and the new ropes of Delilah. Yet, were not our social laws so manifestly arbitrary and oppressive, such eminent philosophers as Plato, Aristotle, and Bacon, such noble heroes as Alexander, Cæsar, Napoleon, and Nelson, such divine poets as Goethe, Burns, and Byron, and such enlightened statesmen as Pericles, Augustus, Buckingham, Palmerston, and Webster, and many thousands more, would never have incurred the odium of libertinism as they have. Although they lived under the system of monogamy, they would

not and did not submit to it. Their noble natures required a larger indulgence, and they took it, law or no law, like brave men as they were. And there are many more such men than the world dreams of in its narrow monogamous philosophy; and yet it is a shame and a pity that our social laws cannot be so amended, and brought into harmony with those of God and Nature, that our noblest men would yield them the most prompt obedience. And is it not a sad pity, a burning shame, and a fearful wrong that our laws are such, that such men cannot acknowledge their mistresses, and avow their children? The wrongs of these women and children are crying to God from the ground, and He will hear and judge. These great men are brave; but they are not brave enough. They have no just right to practise their polygamy in the dark. Let us have either an honest monogamy or an avowed polygamy. Hence it is that I am called by the justice of God and the sufferings of humanity to appeal to every honorable sentiment in mankind in behalf of a greater freedom to marry, and a greater purity of the marriage relation. Let us have such marriage laws, that whatever relations any honorable man shall determine to form with the other sex can be honorably formed and honorably maintained.

## *Hypocrisy of One-Wife Marriages*

But an honest monogamy is an impossibility.

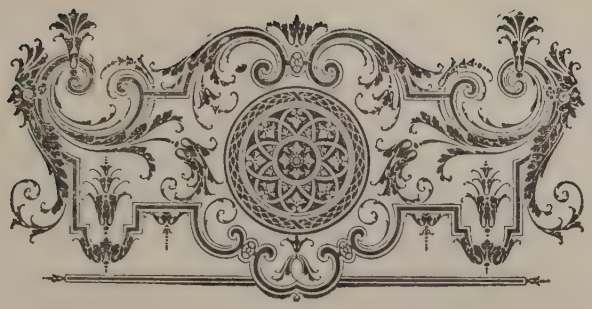
wherever it is practised, it is a system of hypocrisy. It is a veil of abstemiousness assumed to conceal a mass of hidden corruption. Its direct tendency is to stimulate the contemptible vices of intrigue and lying, as well as the equally detestable ones of prostitution and adultery. By attempting to deprive one-half the women of any lawful and honorable means of amorous pleasure, and by allowing the men only partial and inadequate means, it impels a multitude of each sex to secret transgression, or else to open profligacy; and thus the laws of chastity are violated on every hand, and truthfulness, integrity, purity, and honor are becoming but unmeaning terms.

No one familiar with social life in Europe will dare to dispute that a large proportion of the upper classes of society there are addicted to some form of licentiousness. It is often observed there, that, as soon as the women marry, they throw off the restraints of chastity, and encourage secret lovers; and while each of the men live openly with one woman only, or with none, yet they indulge in promiscuous criminal intercourse to an incredible extent. Now, which social system is the more honorable and manly, the more virtuous and pure, the one more in accordance with Nature and the laws of Nature's God,—a pretended and a corrupt monogamy, or an open and honest polygamy? Which manifests the more base and selfish passion,—the man who espouses the partners of his love, and

takes them to his home and his heart, and provides for them and their children, or the man who steals away from his house in the dark, and indulges his dishonorable and degrading passion in secret places, and then abandons the partners of his guilty pleasure to a life of wretchedness and shame and want?

## Chapter VII

# MONOGAMY A BREEDER OF CRIME



# VII. MONOGAMY A BREEDER OF CRIME

## *Marriage Lessens Crime*

It is an acknowledged fact that crime is much more prevalent among unmarried persons than among the married; for the married man's family becomes a pledge to society for his good behavior: nor can the married woman disgrace herself without disgracing also her husband and her children. That system, therefore, which provides marriage for the greater number must be the more favorable to the promotion of public virtue and morality. It has already been demonstrated that polygamy provides for the marriage of the greater number of the women than monogamy can; and it will not be difficult to prove that it also conduces to the marriage of the greater number of the men: for there are always a great many men who will not marry, so long as they can obtain the gratification of their propensities without marriage, which they can do

as long as there are so many unmarried women as there must be wherever monogamy prevails. The richer and more luxurious monogamous society becomes, the more abandoned women there will be, and the fewer marriages and the more crime. But let the system of polygamy be adopted, and, then all the women will be wanted for wives; and as they can then obtain husbands and homes of their own, but few will prefer to follow a loose and vicious course of life. And then the men, being deprived of the opportunity of illicit indulgence, will be compelled to marry; and their marriage will refine and humanize them, and preserve them from many of those vices and immoralities to which they are now addicted. There are many crimes against which the moral sentiment of humanity revolts, but which are constantly forced upon mankind by the tyranny of monogamy, and which nothing but a return to the purer system of polygamy can restrain and prevent. Among many of these crimes and moral evils caused or aggravated by monogamy, and which would be greatly diminished by polygamy, I can mention only a few.

## *Adultery*

The violation of the marriage-vow constitutes the crime of adultery,—a crime which has always been regarded with the greatest detestation among mankind, and which, in ancient times, was pun-

ished with death. The definition of adultery, like that of marriage, depends upon the social system which we adopt. According to the system of monogamy, if any married person has sexual intercourse with anyone, except his own wife, or her own husband, then he or she is guilty of adultery; but if the other party to the same act be unmarried, then that unmarried person is not guilty of adultery, but of fornication only. That is, if a married man has intercourse with another man's wife, then both are guilty of adultery; but if an unmarried man has intercourse with a married woman, then she is guilty of adultery, but he is not. According to the system of polygamy, if any man has intercourse with another man's wife, they are both guilty of adultery; but if any man has intercourse with an unmarried woman, then both are guilty of fornication. That is, it is the married or unmarried state of the woman, and not of the man, that determines the nature of the crime; and both parties to the same act are always by this system held guilty of the same offence. A careful examination of the laws of God and of Nature will enable us to determine which of these definitions is correct, and will also assist us in the determination of the more important question, Which social system is right?

1. If a married woman admit any other man to her bed except her husband, her offspring becomes spurious, or at least uncertain, and her husband may have another man's child imposed upon him

instead of his own, to be supported, and to inherit his estate; but no such uncertainty occurs from the intercourse of one man with several women.

2. If a wife admit the embrace of another lover, it always implies an alienation of her affections from her husband; but it does not imply an alienation of her husband's affections to take another woman, for his first wife is not always capable of fulfilling his conjugal desires; and it is sometimes as much out of regard to her health and comfort as to his own gratification, that he is impelled to take another.

3. If a woman is having intercourse with several men at the same time, she is living in uncleanness and in constant liability of inducing within herself, and communicating to all her lovers, the most loathsome and incurable diseases; her mind and heart become hopelessly depraved, and she incurs the utter loss of all self-respect and all public esteem: but no such diseases of body or degradation of character attach to the man who is living with several women.

These natural laws are fully ratified and confirmed by the divine law: "The man that committeth adultery with another man's wife, the adulterer and the adulteress shall surely be put to death." "But if a man entice a maid that is not betrothed, and lie with her, he shall surely endow her to be his wife." "Because he hath humbled her, he may not put her away all his life." "And

Nathan said to David, Thou art the man. Thus saith the Lord, I delivered thee out of the hand of Saul, and I give thee thy master's house and thy master's wives into thy bosom; and gave thee the house of Israel and Judah, and if that had been too little, I would moreover have given thee such and such things. Wherefore hast thou despised the commandment of the Lord to do evil in his sight, and hast taken the wife of Uriah the Hittite to be thy wife? Now, therefore, the sword shall never depart from thy house, because thou hast despised me, and hast taken the wife of Uriah the Hittite to be thy wife." It seems unnecessary to cite further proofs. The entire Bible confirms the definition of adultery as given by the system of polygamy.

The civil laws of those States practising monogamy, in defining adultery, are full of contradictions and obscurities. Their theory requires that all married persons, both men and women, who have intercourse with any others except their own husbands, or their own wives, should be called adulterers, and considered equally criminal; but with an open Bible before them, and living nature all around them, they approach sometimes very near to the distinctions set forth in polygamy. The following is Dr. Noah Webster's definition: "*Adultery.* Violation of the marriage-bed; a crime or civil injury which introduces, or may introduce, into a family, a spurious offspring. In *common usage,* adultery means the unfaithfulness of any

married person to the marriage-bed. *By the laws of Connecticut,* the sexual intercourse of any man with a married woman is the *crime* of adultery in both; such intercourse of a married man with an unmarried woman is fornication in both, and adultery of the man within the meaning of the law respecting divorce; but not a felonious adultery in either, or the crime of adultery at common law, or by the statute. This latter offence is, in England, proceeded with only in the ecclesiastical courts."

This definition, according to the laws of Connecticut, is the very one which polygamy requires, with the exception of that part of it relating to divorce; and doubtless the God-fearing legislators of the "Land of Steady Habits" who framed this statute were more familiar with the Bible than with Roman codes, and besides, had very little respect for the authority of popes or councils. In Massachusetts, also, the statute requires that "when the crime is committed between a married woman and a man who is unmarried, the man shall be deemed guilty of adultery." *Rev. Stat. of Mass.*, 1860. In most of the States of the American Union, however, the laws define adultery, according to common usage, as the theory of monogamy requires. And the consequence is, that it is regarded as a very trifling crime by the statutes of those States, the common penalty being only one hundred dollars' fine, or six months' imprisonment, even this light penalty being rarely inflicted; for the public

conscience is so depraved by the false definitions of monogamous jurisprudence in respect to this crime, that few men will prosecute and few juries will convict either an adulterer or an adulteress.

Yet, with a curious inconsistency, whenever an injured husband appeals to the higher law of God, and assumes the awful responsibility to inflict with his own hand the penalty of death to the adulterer, the multitude applaud, or, at least, excuse the vindictive act; and men of undoubted respectability are thus impelled to private revenge, not only in the heat of resentment, when the guilty parties are first detected, but even in cold blood, and as an afterthought for vindicating personal and family honor. And, when he is arraigned for trial, the jury, sympathizing with him as the injured husband, are almost sure to acquit him with applause. Instances of such homicides are, unhappily, too common to require authentication. Since this is the state of our public morals, who are the barbarians if we are not? What is barbarism but private revenge? In what does civilization consist, if not in maintaining the sacred supremacy of law, and in furnishing adequate protection and vindication of life and honor? But the monogamous law of adultery is so contradictory to the divine law, and so absurdly at variance with common sense and common justice, that injured marital honor now has no redress but a barbarous one. A revision of the law concerning adultery, defining the

crime, as polygamy does, in accordance with the laws of God, and enforcing it by an adequate penalty, is all that is necessary to disarm the assassin, and to invest the law itself with that majesty and sanctity which a true Christian civilization demands.

## *Murder*

It is a notorious fact, that, where the system of monogamy prevails, the most common cause of murder is an unhappy marriage. Husbands murder their wives, and wives murder their husbands, or incite others to do it, almost every week. When love turns to hatred, it is the bitterest kind of hatred; and when people hate each other, their hatred becomes the more intense, the more closely they are bound together. The bonds of matrimony are softer than silk, and sweeter than wreaths of flowers, so long as mutual love and mutual confidence subsist; but when these are banished from the domestic altar, and their places usurped by distrust and jealousy, then those bonds become heavier than iron shackles, and more corroding than fetters of brass. Under such circumstances, a separation of some kind is eagerly desired. This desire is spontaneous and instinctive; but the marriage-vow has been so solemnly uttered and recorded, that there can be no honorable separation but death. Then the dreadful crime of murder is conceived

and cherished and pondered in the mind, until it takes complete possession of it. The idea of murder is begotten between the desire of dissolving the marriage and the desire of maintaining one's public honor. And both desires cannot be gratified in any other way. Divorce is dishonorable. It occasions endless talk and scandal, and divulges family secrets. It makes one inevitably notorious. It often involves immense expense. Persons, therefore, whose desires are naturally impetuous, and who are determined to obtain a speedy separation from their hated husbands or wives, are peculiarly liable to this crime. They study out a plan that promises complete success. They are quite sure that they can manage to murder their companions without being found out. At all events, they often do murder them, and run the risk of being found out, as well as the additional risk of divine punishment in the world to come. Many cases of murder for this cause never are found out; but enough are discovered to prove that the dreadful crime is one of frequent occurrence. It has been brought to light that some men have murdered a number of wives, and some women a number of husbands in succession. The nursery story of Bluebeard may be a horrible fiction; but it is a fiction founded on fact: there must be some verisimilitude about it, or it could never have interested so many generations as it has. Many well-authenticated instances of wife-murder have occurred for which no excuse

of jealousy or domestic infelicity can be urged, and which can only be accounted for on the ground of men's capricious desires and love of change. The history of Henry VIII., king of England, and his six wives, most of whom were successively murdered to make room for their successors, is an obvious and an authentic instance.

Now, polygamy furnishes the only sufficient preventive of this horrible crime; for almost any man would sooner support an extra wife, if the usages of society would allow it, than to take the life of his present wife, at the imminent risk of his own. And many men will do it, and are now doing it, even against the usages of society, and in spite of the regulations of monogamy. Thus King Henry II., less sanguinary, or more independent of public opinion, than his brilliant descendant above mentioned, still permitted his queen Eleanor to live, and to wear the crown, though he often preferred the society of the fair Rosamond to hers, and often repaired to her sylvan bowers at Woodstock to enjoy it. And most of the sovereigns of Europe have followed his example; but, like Charles II. and the four Georges, they keep their mistresses nearer court than at Woodstock.

## *Divorce*

The marriage-relation is designed to be a permanent and an inseparable one. The parties take each other by the hand, and mutually plight their

troth, for better or for worse, to love and to cherish, in prosperity and in adversity, in health and in sickness, till death shall part them. Such a union is most honorable: it is most admirable. But, under the system of monogamy it is often impracticable. Although the laws of Christ allow of but one cause for divorce,—the unfaithfulness of the wife to the marriage-vow,—and although every State that practises monogamy claims to be a Christian State, yet civil laws allow of divorce for the most trifling causes. The excuse is made, that, when married persons are unhappy in their marriage-relation, divorce alone can prevent neglect and abuse; and it may prevent murder. So they allow them to commit one great crime to prevent their committing another and a greater. This is, of course, fallacious reasoning. But, if it were most exact reasoning, the remedy is dangerous, unnecessary, and directly at variance with the laws of God. Polygamy is a safer and a surer remedy or rather preventive of both divorce and murder than any violation of divine law can be. The laws of God and of Nature always harmonize with each other; and the only manner in which we can perfect our civil laws is to bring them into perfect accordance with the former.

Most men who desire a divorce would prefer polygamy, if it were practicable and lawful. A man does not often undertake to repudiate his present wife, until he begins to desire another.

And that other one is already selected and already loved; but the love cannot be consummated. And nothing but the desire of consummating this love carries him through with the divorce. For, if the law of the land favors the divorce, there still remains the law of God to oppose it; and hence divorces are usually difficult, expensive, annoying, and slow. It took Henry VIII. five years, with all his wealth and power, to divorce himself from his first wife, Catharine of Aragon, in favor of Anne Boleyn, with whom he was desperately in love all the while. If she had yielded to his solicitations, and granted him illicit gratification, it is not at all probable that he would ever have prosecuted the divorce to its termination. And thus is every divorce more or less tedious, and it ought to be. Christianity forbids it, the wife resists it, children plead, and friends expostulate against it, the world wonders and stares; and yet, in spite of all opposition, the vehement passions of men often drive them through it. Yet the greatest suffering of all is that of the man's own conscience, who persists in it. To do such violence to the most solemn laws of God and the most honorable sentiments of mankind is no light crime, whatever the laws of the State may term it. Polygamy furnishes the only preventive of this great social evil. If a man loves another woman, and is resolved to have her, let him take her, and keep her, and keep his first one also. Napoleon Bonaparte never would have di-

vorced Josephine, had polygamy been deemed lawful and proper. Yet no man ever had a fairer pretext for divorce upon any mere prudential considerations than he had. Her virtue was unquestionable. It was not only above reproach, it was above suspicion. But all hopes of her having offspring had failed. His desire for an heir was most intense, most natural, and most commendable. It seemed to be all that was wanting to secure the stability of his throne, the good of his people, and the peace of the world. Yet, according to the system of monogamy, the only manner in which these very desirable ends could be attained was by the divorce of Josephine, by whose alliance he had been brought to more public notice, and been greatly assisted in his successful career, and who was one of the loveliest and noblest women that ever wore a crown. The divorce was consummated, the reasons for it were publicly announced; but the moral sense of the world was shocked, and Napoleon was at once pronounced a tyrant and a monster. And this act is still held by many to be the turning-point both in his personal character and in his public career. Before this, all his history is bright; after it, all is dark. One cannot, even now, after so long a time, contemplate the tears of Josephine and the subsequent disasters of Napoleon, without cursing the narrow bigotry of monogamy, and wishing that the golden age of polygamy had returned before this day.

At the court of David, King of Israel, even the rape and the incest of Tamar were not so unpardonable as her abandonment. Although shocked and indignant at the brutal violence of her half-brother Amnon, yet her tenderness could not deny some pity to the intensity of his passion. "Nay, my brother, do not force me," she said. "Speak to the king; for he will not withhold me from thee." But when his lust had been sated, and he commanded her to be gone, she refused to go; saying, "This evil in sending me away is greater than the other."* Then he caused her to be put out forcibly, and the door to be bolted. It was this insulting divorce added to her forcible humiliation that broke her heart. The latter she might forgive, the former she could not; and she rent her purple robes, and went out crying with her hand upon her head. It was this cruel repudiation that whetted the dagger of Absalom to avenge her wrongs, and it was this that fills up the measure of Amnon's guilt in the judgment of every honest heart. God did not require David to put away Bathsheba after he had once ravished her, and would not have permitted him to do so, had he desired it, although he had obtained her by blood and fraud. His punishment must come in some other manner. Their marriage, once consummated by cohabitation, was complete and indissoluble. How differ-

* 2 Sam. xiii.

ently would a similar case be now decided by the ecclesiastical courts of modern Europe! Can men's judgment be more just than God's?

## *Procuring Abortion*

The murder of the child *in embryo* is a crime prohibited by law, and most repugnant to humanity. Yet it is one which the system of monogamy is obliged to wink at and tolerate. This horrid crime is becoming more and more common every year, till it is now somewhat fashionable, especially as it is more commonly practised by fashionable people. Not many years ago, the person who dispensed drugs for such vile purposes was branded as a villain, or looked upon as a hateful hag; a Locusta, whose fit dwelling-place was some dark cave among volcanic mountains, and whose fit companions were venomous serpents and wild foxes: but it is now currently reported that one of the popular compounders of these death-dealing drugs is deemed worthy of the honor of knighthood,* and is appointed physician extraordinary to the queen. Almost every newspaper now contains a well-displayed advertisement, addressed "to the ladies," setting forth the powerful properties of some specific for "removing obstructions," and "bringing on the monthly periods," with entire certainty; and although these drugs will be "sure to

* Sir [?] James Clarke.

cause miscarriage," yet they are at the same time so "mild and safe as not to be injurious to the most delicate constitution." Such are some of the most impudent claims of the modern abortionist.

But the manufacturers and the consumers of drugs for these abominable practices are not the only ones responsible for the crime. Monogamy is responsible for it. The entire social system is corrupt. The most respectable merchants and apothecaries deal in these drugs, the most respectable journals advertise them, everybody reads about them; yet no protesting voice is raised, either against the use of them or the traffic in them. The ministers of religion, the proper censors of the public morals, are silent: the subject is too indelicate for them to allude to. The police-magistrates and other officers of the law make no effort to bring the guilty parties to justice, except in the most shocking and notorious instances, where the life of the mother is taken, as well as that of the child.

Intelligent and respectable physicians, who have the best opportunities of knowing, state that this vice is now practised more commonly by married women than by the unmarried; and it is not difficult to account for it. Under the system of monogamy, the wife attempts too much, and physical impossibilities are expected and required of her. She alone undertakes to supply all her husband's conjugal wants, and to gratify all his amorous desires;

and she is quite conscious that, even in the bloom of her youth, in perfect health, and in the height of her charms, she is scarcely capable of doing it: and she dreads to have anything happen to her to make her less capable. Especially if she has already borne one child, and has passed through the long period of lactation, she remembers its effect upon herself and upon her husband with alarm. She fancies herself in danger of losing her hold upon his affections, which she wishes to retain, of course, as long as possible. She therefore takes drugs to prevent fruitfulness, and to preserve her form and beauty, in order to prevent her husband's affections being lavished upon others.

And if the system of monogamy be right, then this motive is commendable, and the reasoning based upon it is entirely valid. No wife can be blamed for wishing to prevent her husband from forming illicit attachments, and thus bringing dishonor upon himself and all his house; and the only means at her command for preventing it is to concentrate all his affections upon herself.

But polygamy is capable of suppressing this vice, or, at least, of greatly diminishing it, by removing its most powerful motives. Under the system of polygamy, the burdens as well as the privileges of the women are more equally distributed. No woman is required or expected to be always prepared for her husband's embraces, nor does she claim any more than she is able to receive, or than

he is voluntarily inclined to bestow. If she is full of life, and in vigorous health, and is capable of fulfilling her conjugal duties alone, it is well: her husband is a happy man. But, if she is not able, it is still well. Her husband need not be unhappy; for he can espouse another, without reproach to her or dishonor to himself.

## *Fecundity Ought to Be Promoted*

The laws of God and of Nature concur in bearing unqualified testimony to the desirableness of offspring. It is the proper fruit of marriage, of which love is the blossom. The blossom yields a delicious but an evanescent pleasure; but the fruit, after diligent culture and careful preservation, is a source of perpetual delight and honor. "Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth and subdue it," constitutes the most important part of the divine blessing pronounced upon the first married couple,—a benediction repeated, in substance, upon the occasion of every subsequent marriage, the particulars of which are recorded in the Holy Bible. When the parents of Rebecca sent her away to become the wife of Isaac, they blessed her, and said, "Be thou the mother of thousands of millions"; and when Boaz espoused Ruth the Moabitess, the people that were in the gate, and the elders, said, "The Lord make the woman that is come into thy house, like Rachel and Leah, which two

did build the house of Israel." "Lo, children are a heritage of the Lord and the fruit of the womb is his reward. As arrows are in the hand of a mighty man, so are the children of the youth. Happy is the man that hath his quiver full of them." "Thy wife shall be as a fruitful vine by the sides of thy house, thy children like olive-plants round about thy table. Behold that thus shall the man be blessed that feareth the Lord."*

As fruitfulness, on the one hand, is always declared to be a blessing, in the Bible, so barrenness, on the other hand, is declared to be a curse. The most affecting and the most memorable prayers of females recorded therein are those which beg for offspring; and the most grateful thanksgivings are those for children borne by them. But the unnatural and unholy system of monogamy which now prevails has so strangely perverted our desires, that it seems to change the divine blessing into a curse, and the curse into a blessing. If women would now dare to pray for what they wish, they would pray for barrenness, instead of fruitfulness. Now, there must be something radically wrong in a social system which thus presumes to reverse the course of Nature, and to contradict the divine assurance of blessing and of cursing; and which has so fatally and deeply poisoned the mysterious springs of life, and polluted the most inviolable

* Ps. cxxvii, cxxviii.

sanctuaries of female purity and maternal love.

I doubt whether there can be a form of licentiousness more abhorrent to the laws of God and of Nature than this "Murder of the Innocents." Even fornication cannot be so great a sin. The unmarried woman who has a child in the natural way, and who bestows upon it a mother's love and a mother's care, cannot thereby become so guilty as the married woman who wilfully destroys her offspring, or who prevents her fruitfulness. There is great danger lest the general smattering of medical knowledge among us may do more harm than good. There is, alas! a positive certainty that presumptuous quacks, who know only enough of Nature to have lost their reverence for her laws, are leading many of our honorable women astray, and are poisoning the best blood in our land. These women, like our common mother Eve, from unholy and intensely selfish motives, prompted and countenanced by our system of monogamy, are plucking the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, and intermeddling with those functions of Nature which ought to be let alone. No honorable physician, who is master of his profession, will degrade that profession so much as to descend to such vile practice. His business is not to destroy life, but to save it. He, at least, has learned the most profound respect for the laws of our being.

We had better know nothing of the laws of gestation than to know only enough to evade or

violate them; for they cannot be violated with impunity. The time will come when the young wife who now destroys her unborn offspring, or who otherwise wilfully and wickedly tampers with her reproductive powers, will surely mourn their loss, and will mourn as one that cannot be comforted. Like Rachel, she will beg and pray for fruitfulness, and say, "Oh! give me children, or else I die"; but, not like Rachel, she will beg and pray in vain. Those delicate organs once weakened by violent or unnatural means rarely regain their normal condition, and one voluntary abortion may be followed by many involuntary miscarriages. She loses all, and she is guilty of all; and some day she will surely feel both her loss and her guilt, till it becomes, like the punishment of the first murderer, a burden too heavy to be borne. Never can she know by blissful experience the sweetness of a mother's love; that pure and fond and tender and changeless affection, which so inspires and ennobles the female character. Never can she become quite free from the jealous suspicions of her husband, who, against his will and all his better judgment, is a perpetual prey to the green-eyed demon.

This is no fancy sketch, nor far-fetched representation, but is a faithful portraiture of many of our New England families. The curse of God is already upon us, and our native population is even now giving way to the more prolific races of English, Celts, and Germans. God gives the land to

those who obey his marriage-laws to "be fruitful, and multiply and replenish the earth, and subdue it." As the Israelites drove out the ancient Canaanites who made their children pass through to Moloch, and as they took possession of their fruitful fields and vineyards, already planted, and of their towns and cities, already built; so these poorer, more natural and less artificial immigrants are dispossessing us.*

But it is unnecessary to the satisfactory analysis and comparison of the two marriage-systems to go on, to any greater length, with this painful dissec-

* I quote once more from the Massachusetts Registration Report for 1866, Page 18.

"In England, during the twenty-six years, 1838-1863, with a population of about eighteen millions, the average birth-rate was 3.33 per cent. In Massachusetts, it has never been so high. In the seven years, 1852-1858, it was 2.90. In the five years immediately preceding the war, 1856-1860, it was 2.85. During the four years of war, 1862-1865, the birth-rate was 2.46. We find it now rising, not to the old standard of 2.85 or 2.90, but to 2.69."

Page 28 reads as follows:—

"The foreign-born population of Massachusetts, by the census of 1865, was 265,486, the American population 999,976, and the population of unknown nativity 1,569. The last it is not easy to divide; it seems nearer the probable truth to divide them equally. We have, then, 1,000,761 Americans, and 266,270 foreigners. And they produced in 1866,—the Americans 16,555 children, the foreigners 17,530 children; that is to say, a child was born to every 60 Americans, and to every 15 foreigners; the latter class being four times as productive as the former."

The birth-rate, therefore, of the Americans of Massachusetts for the year 1866 was only 1.65 per cent; while that of the foreign population was 6.59 per cent.

tion of vice, or to array any further statistical proof in confirmation of the inherent licentiousness of monogamy. It would be easy to show that the galling bondage of restricted marriage has had, and is now having, a similar effect upon the great social evils of insanity, suicide, and self-pollution, which it has upon those other forms of vice which have been analyzed above, and to prove that polygamy would tend to mitigate them also. If these hints of mine are seized upon and properly developed by some more capable writer, and so clearly and happily set forth as to lead to a practical reform, it will be honor enough for me to have indicated its necessity and demonstrated its possibility.

# Chapter VIII

# OBJECTIONS TO POLYGAMY

## VIII. OBJECTIONS TO POLYGAMY

A FEW pages will now be devoted to a consideration of the objections which have been urged against the system of polygamy. And it may be proper to say that, if there should be any objections to it which are not here answered to everyone's satisfaction, yet the superiority of this system is still maintained and proved, as long as the previous demonstrations remain valid; the objections to the contrary notwithstanding. It is often the case that a proposition may be true, and at the same time it may not be possible to answer all the objections to it. There are unanswerable objections to a democratic or popular form of government; and yet for some nations, such a form of government may, on the whole, be the best one.

### *Does Polygamy Cause Jealousy?*

It has been objected that polygamy cannot be reasonable or right, since it causes jealousy among

the different women in the same family. But it cannot be proved that jealousy is confined to any particular social system: it is, unfortunately, too common to every system. It is inherent in human nature, and must be regarded as one of its inseparable infirmities. Yet, so far from being most violent under the system of polygamy, the opposite is the fact; for it is always most violent when secret intrigue is carried on, and when the dreaded rival does not sustain an open and an acknowledged relation to the husband, but when the tenderness between him and that rival, whether real or suspected, is only secretly indulged: so that monogamy really furnishes more occasion for the exercise of this cruel passion than polygamy. In the latter system, the claims of the different women are acknowledged and understood; the parties all stand in well-defined relations to each other, and violent jealousy, under such circumstances, must be comparatively rare.

## *Is Polygamy Degrading to Women?*

It has also been objected, that polygamy cannot be reasonable and right, since it places men and women on terms of social inequality; it exalts man, and degrades woman; it makes her dependent on his will; it demands of her her undivided love and fidelity towards him, while he is permitted to lavish his affections upon as many as he may please. But all this is not degrading to her. It is the only

thing that saves her from degradation. The experience of every age and of every community has proved that many men cannot and will not content themselves with one woman. There must be polygamy, or else there must be prostitution; and prostitution is wickedness, and wickedness is degradation.

Nor is there anything degrading in woman's dependence upon man. This dependence is natural, and honorable to her. It is the very position which she herself voluntarily and instinctively assumes towards him. The entire code of polite, social intercourse between the two sexes is founded on this principle of her nature. Not only in times of real danger, but at all times, she loves to lean upon the strong, brave arm of man, and willingly confesses her own timidity and weakness. And these qualities are so far from degrading her, that they only render her the more attractive and lovely. The manly gallant is as ready to afford assistance as she is to accept it. In riding, in walking, in dancing, in sailing, in bathing, in the public assembly, in the social gathering, and everywhere where it is possible to receive attention and accept assistance and protection, it is equally pleasing and ennobling for her to receive, and for him to bestow them.

## *Woman's Rights*

They are her rights,—her woman's rights. I believe in woman's rights, and I believe that polyg-

amy is the system that can best assure them to her; for, as it is a mathematical certainty that there are more women than men in the world, some men must assume the protection of more than one woman each, or some women must be deprived of their rights. The most sacred and the most precious of all her rights are her rights to a husband and a home; and it is no more a degradation to her to share that home and that husband with another woman than it is to share other benefits and other attentions from the same man, in common with other women. No woman considers herself degraded to walk abroad with her hand upon a man's arm while another woman has her hand upon the other arm; thus they often appear in public, at balls and concerts and lectures and churches. For the time being, they are both willingly dependent upon his protection and his bounty; and he is also dependent upon each of them for the benefits of their companionship and the charms of their society. He could not so fully enjoy those entertainments without them. For example, there are two female friends residing together, and mutually dependent upon each other for many of their social enjoyments, and for much of their intellectual and moral culture. A worthy young man of their acquaintance calls upon them frequently, and admires them both; and they enjoy his visits, for neither of them have any other male associate. At length he invites them both to a public entertain-

ment. Neither of them would be willing to leave her friend, and go with him alone; nor could he well endure the thought of enjoying himself abroad with one, while the other would be deserted and neglected at home,—the other who would enjoy the entertainment so much, and whose enjoyment would so much enhance theirs. Now, if this triple companionship shall ripen into friendship, and the friendship into love, and the love shall result in a triple marriage, where is the degradation? Would it not be still more heartless to desert either of the friends now, when each heart is thrilling with the harmonious music of the triple love? Let the words of divine wisdom answer,—

"Two are better than one, . . . and a threefold cord is not quickly broken."

There is a want in the female nature which impels her to seek and to appreciate the society of a male friend, which no number of associates of her own sex can fully satisfy. I have stood by the gates of the cotton-mill, and seen the multitudes of female operatives stream out of an evening, and I marked their lonesome appearance as they repaired to their respective homes. Homes, did I say? Ah! anything but homes,—their boarding-houses. There I have seen them sit down, by scores, to the dinner-table, and eat their dinners in the utmost silence, as if each one was entirely isolated from all social and agreeable companionship. Oh, what loneliness! how hard! how bitter! Yet many

of them were radiant with the charms of womanhood, and each one capable of adorning and blessing a home, but which few of them will ever enjoy; for they are not only the unwilling victims of poverty and toil, but the willing votaries of fashion, and the unconscious slaves of monogamy.

## *Women Love Vigorous Men*

Those qualities of mind and person which impel a woman to seek the protection of the stronger sex arising from her natural weakness and timidity, are really those very qualities which inspire the deepest admiration; yet, should a man happen to display these feminine qualities, they only render him supremely contemptible.

Where women are concerned a man must be strong, self-reliant, and courageous. No woman can devotedly love a man, unless she sees, or thinks she sees, in him a *power* of mind or of body, or of both which Nature has denied to her. It is this power which she intuitively admires and venerates and worships, even though its exercise over her may be arbitrary and tyrannical. The Sabine matrons loved their Roman lords none the less because they had seized them with the strong hand; and a woman is always and everywhere more ready to forgive the too great ardor and boldness of a lover than his unmanly timidity and shame. For a wife to look up to her husband for authority and guid-

ance is as natural as to look to him for protection from danger; and this is as natural as breathing. It is therefore true, though it may seem hard to some to admit it, that it is his right and duty to exercise authority, and her right and privilege to practise complaisance and submission.

Yet while God and Nature have constituted man the superior to woman in strength and courage and authority, these principles do not render her relation to man one of degredation or even of general inferiority; for there are many other and no less admirable qualities in which she surpasses him. Her moral and religious sentiments are more susceptible and her intellectual perceptions are truer and keener in respect to those matters requiring delicacy of taste and refinement of mind. Her humane sympathies are also stronger; she is sooner moved by the sentiments of compassion, benevolence and charity. Blessings, on her gentle heart! What a dreary world would this be without woman! And it is only polygamy that appreciates and appropriates her. Monogamy neglects her, spurns her, corrupts her, and degrades her.

## *Constitutional Differences of Sex*

Because a woman's heart is so constituted, that it is impossible for her to cherish a sincere love for more than one husband at the same time, it is even difficult for her to believe that a man can cherish

a sincere and honest love for more than one woman at the same time. It is difficult for her to believe it; for she cannot comprehend it. Her own instincts revolt against the thought of a plurality of husbands, and, judging his feeling by her own, she does not see how a man can want, or at least can truly love, a plurality of wives. But, as this point involves a constitutional difference of sex, it is one in which we must be aware that our feelings cannot guide us. A man can never know the infinite tenderness and the infinite patience of a mother's love, except imperfectly, by reason and observation. His experience does not teach him. His paternal love does not exactly resemble it. So a woman can never know the purity and sincerity of a man's conjugal love for a plurality of wives, except by similar observation and reason. Her conjugal love is unlike it. Her love for one man exhausts and absorbs her whole conjugal nature; there is no room for more. And if she ever receives the truth that his nature is capable of a plural love, she must attain it by the use of her reason, or admit it upon the testimony of honest men.

It would be as impossible and as unnatural for a pure-minded, virtuous woman to have more than one husband, as for the earth to have more than one sun; but, it is not unnatural nor impossible for a pure and noble-minded man to cherish the most devoted love for several wives at the same time: it is as natural for him as it is for the sun to have

several planets at the same time, each one dependent on him, and each one harmonious in her own sphere. To each planet the sun yields all the light and heat which she is capable of receiving or which she would be capable of receiving, were she the only planet in the sky. Each planet attracts the sun to the utmost of her weight,—the exhaustion of her power; and the sun returns her attraction to an exactly equal degree, and no more. Not one planet nor two, nor all combined, are able to exhaust his power, or move him from his sphere.

## *Masculine Responsibility*

The responsibilities of the man are in proportion to his strength and authority. He must assume the care and provide for the support of the family; and his female companions will submit to this authority, if they are wise and prudent, with all the grace and gentleness which distinguish their sex.

The capacity of a man to attract and support several women must depend upon the amount of his talent, his fortune, and his benevolence, as well as upon his physical strength and vitality. There are some men who are scarcely able to attract the love and provide for the support of one woman; others are well able, if they are willing, to maintain several wives, but they are too penurious and too selfish to attempt it: and such men do not deserve the love of one. But there are others who

are both able and willing, and who can as well love and provide for several as for one, and even better; for, if a man of immense vitality and corresponding mentality have but one, she must necessarily suffer from the superabundance of his power, and perhaps, like Semele in the too ardent embraces of Jove, may prove an early victim to the powerful demonstrations of his love. But even should he use the utmost tenderness, and never forget to restrain his burning ardor, yet, so long as he lives under the system of monogamy, such a husband must often be the occasion of the keenest suffering to a delicate woman. It is a source of constant pain and grief to her that she cannot come up to her husband's capacity, nor satisfy his conjugal requirements. She often tortures herself with the thought that he cannot love her, for she feels herself so much his inferior, and so utterly unworthy of his love. She often says that she knows he wishes her to die, that he might marry another. She wishes herself dead. She is madly jealous of every other woman who comes within the circle of their acquaintance, even though her husband may have no fancy for her; but the poor wife fears he may have, and this constant fear is worse than the worst reality. But, on the other hand, if he were a polygamist, and this same woman were one of his wives, she would then be happy and content. For she would continue to receive from him all the demonstrations of love she is capable of enduring,

while she would joyfully contribute her share towards completing the capacity of his. Then it would constitute her happiness to behold him happy, and to enjoy the consciousness of having done what she could to make him so. She now *rejoices* in his abundant vitality, and *is proud* of his superiority. And when his manliness, his dignity, and his power are radiated upon her beaming countenance, and reflected thence, it is then that her heart is filled with the utmost delight and satisfaction of which it is susceptible. Having become his wife, she is so entirely devoted to him, that she almost loses in him her own identity. She throws herself upon his ample breast and within his enfolding arms, and yields both her person and her will to his control; and she only regrets, when she has given up all, that she has not more to give.

# SIR RICHARD BURTON ON POLYGAMY

## Excursus I

## CELESTIAL MARRIAGE

## I. CELESTIAL MARRIAGE*

THE polygamic era directly followed the monogamic: it became the custom of the church, when, on their toil-conquered oasis in the Great Desert, the Mormons found themselves in comparative security. I give *in extenso* the sole command of heaven upon the subject of—

### CELESTIAL MARRIAGE

A REVELATION ON THE PATRIARCHAL ORDER OF MATRIMONY, OR PLURALITY OF WIVES

*Given to Joseph Smith, the Seer, in Nauvoo, July 12th, 1843*

1. Verily, then saith the Lord unto you my servant Joseph, that inasmuch as you have inquired of my hand, to know and understand wherein I, the Lord, justified my servants, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, as also Moses, David, and Solomon, my servants, as touching the principle and doctrine of

* This and the following three extracts are from *The City of the Saints, London,* 1861, by R. F. Burton.

their having many wives and concubines: Behold! and lo, I am the Lord thy God, and will answer thee as touching this matter: Therefore prepare thy heart to receive and obey the instructions which I am about to give unto you; for all those who have this law revealed unto them must obey the same; for behold! I reveal unto you a new and an everlasting covenant, and if ye abide not that covenant, then are ye damned; for no one can reject this covenant, and be permitted to enter into my glory; for all who will have a blessing at my hands shall abide the law which was appointed for that blessing, and the conditions thereof, as was instituted from before the foundations of the world; and as pertaining to the new and everlasting covenant, it was instituted for the fulness of my glory; and he that receiveth a fulness thereof must and shall abide the law, or he shall be damned, saith the Lord God.

2. And verily I say unto you, that the conditions of this law are these: All covenants, contracts, bonds, obligations, oaths, vows, performances, connections, associations, or expectations, that are not made and entered into, and sealed, by the Holy Spirit of promise, of him who is anointed, both as well for time and for all eternity, and that too most holy, by revelation and commandment, through the medium of mine anointed, whom I have appointed on the earth to hold this power, (and I have appointed unto my servant Joseph to

hold this power in the last days, and there is never but one on the earth at a time on whom this power and the keys of the priesthood are conferred), are of no efficacy, virtue, or force, in and after the resurrection from the dead: for all contracts that are not made unto this end have an end when men are dead.

3. Behold! mine house is a house of order, saith the Lord God, and not a house of confusion. Will I accept of an offering, saith the Lord, that is not made in my name? Or, will I receive at your hands that which I have not appointed? And will I appoint unto you, saith the Lord, except it be by law, even as I and my Father ordained unto you before the world was? I am the Lord thy God, and I give unto you this commandment, that no man shall come unto the Father but by me, or by my word which is my law, saith the Lord; and everything that is in the world, whether it be ordained of men, by thrones, or principalities, or powers, or things of name, whatsoever they may be, that are not by me, or by my word, saith the Lord, shall be thrown down, and shall not remain after men are dead, neither in nor after the resurrection, saith the Lord your God; for whatsoever things remaineth are by me, and whatsoever things are not by me shall be shaken and destroyed.

4. Therefore, if a man marry him a wife in the world, and he marry her not by me, nor by my word, and he covenant with her so long as he is

in the world, and she with him, their covenant and marriage is not of force when they are dead, and when they are out of the world; therefore they are not bound by any law when they are out of the world; therefore, when they are out of the world, they neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are appointed angels in heaven, which angels are ministering servants, to minister for those who are worthy of a far more and an exceeding and an eternal weight of glory; for these angels did not abide my law, therefore they cannot be enlarged, but remain separately and singly, without exaltation, in their saved condition, to all eternity, and from henceforth are not Gods, but are angels of God for ever and ever.

5. And again, verily I say unto you, if a man marry a wife, and make a covenant with her for time and for all eternity, if that covenant is not by me or by my word, which is my law, and is not sealed by the Holy Spirit of promise, through him whom I have anointed and appointed unto this power, then it is not valid, neither of force, when they are out of the world, because they are not joined by me, saith the Lord, neither by my word; when they are out of the world, it cannot be received there, because the angels and the gods are appointed there, by whom they cannot pass: they cannot, therefore, inherit my glory, for my house is a house of order, saith the Lord God.

6. And again, verily I say unto you, if a man

marry a wife by my word, which is my law, and by the new and everlasting covenant, and it is sealed unto them by the Holy Spirit of promise, by him who is anointed, unto whom I have appointed this power, and the keys of this priesthood, and it shall be said unto them, ye shall come forth in the first resurrection; and if it be after the first resurrection, in the next resurrection; and shall inherit thrones, kingdoms, principalities and powers, dominions, all heights and depths, then shall it be written in the Lamb's Book of Life, that he shall commit no murder whereby to shed innocent blood; and if ye abide in my covenant, and commit no murder whereby to shed innocent blood, it shall be done unto them in all things whatsoever my servant hath put upon them, in time, and through all eternity, and shall be of full force when they are out of the world; and they shall pass by the angels, and the Gods, which are set there, to their exaltation and glory in all things, as hath been sealed upon their heads, which glory shall be a fulness and a continuation of the seeds for ever and ever.

7. Then shall they be Gods, because they have no end; therefore shall they be from everlasting to everlasting, because they continue; then shall they be above all, because all things are subject unto them. Then shall they be Gods, because they have all power, and the angels are subject unto them.

8. Verily, verily I say unto you, except ye abide my law, ye cannot attain to this glory; for straight is the gate, and narrow the way that leadeth unto the exaltation and continuation of the lives, and few there be that find it, because ye receive me not in the world, neither do ye know me. But if ye receive me in the world, then shall ye know me, and shall receive your exaltation, that where I am, ye shall be also. This is eternal life, to know the only wise and true God, and Jesus Christ whom he hath sent. I am He. Receive ye, therefore, my law. Broad is the gate, and wide the way that leadeth to the death; and many there are that go in thereat; because they receive me not, neither do they abide in my law.

9. Verily, verily I say unto you, if a man marry a wife according to my word, and they are sealed by the Holy Spirit of promise, according to mine appointment, and he or she shall commit any sin or transgression of the new and everlasting covenant whatever, and all manner of blasphemies, and if they commit no murder, wherein they shed innocent blood,—yet they shall come forth in the first resurrection, and enter into their exaltation, but they shall be destroyed in the flesh, and shall be delivered unto the buffetings of Satan, unto the day of redemption, saith the Lord God.

10. The blasphemy against the Holy Ghost, which shall not be forgiven in the world, nor out of the world, is in that ye commit murder, wherein

ye shed innocent blood, and assent unto my death, after ye have received my new and everlasting covenant, saith the Lord God; and he that abideth not this law, can in nowise enter into my glory, but shall be damned, saith the Lord.

11. I am the Lord thy God, and will give unto thee the law of my Holy Priesthood, as was ordained by me, and my Father, before the world was. Abraham received all things, whatsoever he received, by revelation and commandment, by my word, saith the Lord, and hath entered into his exaltation, and sitteth upon his throne.

12. Abraham received promises concerning his seed, and of the fruit of his loins,—from whose loins ye are, viz., my servant Joseph,—which were to continue, so long as they were in the world; and as touching Abraham and his seed, out of the world, they should continue; both in the world and out of the world should they continue as innumerable as the stars; or, if ye were to count the sand upon the sea-shore, ye could not number them. This promise is yours also, because ye are of Abraham, and the promise was made unto Abraham; and by this law are the continuation of the works of my Father, wherein he glorifieth himself. Go ye, therefore, and do the works of Abraham; enter ye into my law, and ye shall be saved. But if ye enter not into my law ye cannot receive the promises of my Father, which he made unto Abraham.

13. God commanded Abraham, and Sarah gave

Hagar to Abraham to wife. And why did she do it? Because this was the law, and from Hagar sprang many people. This, therefore, was fulfilling, among other things, the promises. Was Abraham, therefore, under condemnation? Verily, I say unto you, *Nay;* for I, the Lord, commanded it. Abraham was commanded to offer his son Isaac; nevertheless, it was written, Thou shalt not kill. Abraham, however, did not refuse and it was accounted unto him for righteousness.

14. Abraham received concubines, and they bare him children, and it was accounted unto him for righteousness, because they were given unto him, and he abode in my law: as Isaac also, and Jacob did none other things than that which they were commanded, and because they did none other things than that which they were commanded, they have entered into their exaltation, according to the promises, and sit upon thrones; and are not angels, but are Gods. David also received many wives and concubines, as also Solomon, and Moses my servant; and also many others of my servants, from the beginning of creation until this time; and in nothing did they sin, save in those things which they received not of me.

15. David's wives and concubines were given unto him, of me, by the hand of Nathan, my servant, and others of the prophets who had the keys of this power; and in none of these things did he sin against me, save in the case of Uriah and his

wife; and therefore he hath fallen from his exaltation, and received his portion; and he shall not inherit them out of the world; for I gave them unto another, saith the Lord.

16. I am the Lord thy God, and I gave unto thee, my servant Joseph, an appointment, and to restore all things; ask what ye will, and it shall be given unto you, according to my word; and as ye have asked concerning adultery, verily, verily I say unto you, if a man receiveth a wife in the new and everlasting covenant, and if she be with another man, and I have not appointed unto her by the holy anointing, she hath committed adultery, and shall be destroyed. If she be not in the new and everlasting covenant, and she be with another man, she hath committed adultery; and if her husband be with another woman, and he was under a vow, he hath broken his vow, and hath committed adultery; and if she hath not committed adultery, but is innocent, and hath not broken her vow, and she knoweth it, and I reveal it unto you my servant Joseph, then shall you have power, by the power of my Holy Priesthood, to take her and give her unto him that hath not committed adultery, but hath been faithful, for he shall be made ruler over many; for I have conferred upon you the keys and power of the priesthood, wherein I restore all things, and make known unto you, all things in due time.

17. And verily, verily I say unto you, that what-

soever you seal on earth, shall be sealed in heaven; and whatsoever you bind on earth, in my name, and by my word, saith the Lord, it shall be eternally bound in the heavens: and whosesoever sins you remit on earth, shall be remitted eternally in the heavens; and whosesoever sins ye retain on earth, shall be retained in heaven.

18. And again, verily I say, whomsoever you bless I will bless, and whomsoever you curse I will curse, saith the Lord; for I, the Lord, am thy God.

19. And again, verily I say unto you, my servant Joseph, that whatsoever you give on earth, and to whomsoever you give any one on earth, by my word, and according to my law, it shall be visited with blessings, and not cursings, and with my power, saith the Lord, and shall be without condemnation on earth and in heaven; for I am the Lord thy God, and will be with thee even unto the end of the world, and through all eternity: for verily I seal upon you your exaltation, and prepare a throne for you in the kingdom of my Father, with Abraham your father. Behold, I have seen your sacrifices, and will forgive all your sins; I have seen your sacrifices, in obedience to that which I have told you: go, therefore, and I make a way for your escape, as I accepted the offering of Abraham, of his son Isaac.

20. Verily I say unto you, a commandment I give unto mine handmaid, Emma Smith, your wife,

whom I have given unto you, that she stay herself, and partake not of that which I commanded you to offer unto her: for I did it, saith the Lord, to prove you all, as I did Abraham, and that I might require an offering at your hand, by covenant and sacrifice: and let mine handmaid, Emma Smith, receive all those that have been given unto my servant Joseph, and who are virtuous and pure before me; and those who are not pure, and have said they are pure, shall be destroyed, saith the Lord God; for I am the Lord thy God, and ye shall obey my voice: and I give unto my servant Joseph, that he shall be made ruler over many things, for he hath been faithful over a few things, and from henceforth I will strengthen him.

21. And I command mine handmaid, Emma Smith, to abide and cleave unto my servant Joseph, and to none else. But if she will not abide this commandment, she shall be destroyed, saith the Lord; for I am the Lord thy God, and will destroy her if she abide not in my law; but if she will abide this commandment, then shall my servant Joseph do all things for her, even as he hath said; and I will bless him, and multiply him, and give unto him a hundred-fold in this world, of fathers and mothers, brothers and sisters, houses and lands, wives and children, and crowns of eternal lives in the eternal worlds. And again, verily I say, let mine handmaid forgive my servant Joseph his trespasses, and then shall she be forgiven her tres-

passes wherein she has trespassed against me; and I, the Lord thy God, will bless her and multiply her, and make her heart to rejoice.

22. And again, I say, let not my servant Joseph put his property out of his hands, lest an enemy come and destroy him, for Satan seeketh to destroy; for I am the Lord thy God, and he is my servant; and behold! and lo, I am with him, as I was with Abraham thy father, even unto his exaltation and glory.

23. Now, as touching the law of the priesthood, there are many things pertaining thereunto. Verily, if a man be called of my Father, as was Aaron, by mine own voice, and by the voice of him that sent me, and I have endowed him with the keys of the power of this priesthood, if he do anything in my name, and according to my law, and by my word, he will not commit sin, and I will justify him. Let no one, therefore, set on my servant Joseph; for I will justify him; for he shall do the sacrifice which I require at his hands, for his transgressions, saith the Lord your God.

24. And again, as pertaining to the law of the priesthood: If any man espouse a virgin, and desire to espouse another, and the first give her consent; and if he espouse the second, and they are virgins, and have vowed to no other man, then is he justified; he cannot commit adultery, for they are given unto him; for he cannot commit adultery with that that belongeth unto them, and to none

else; and if he have ten virgins given unto him by this law, he cannot commit adultery, for they belong to him, and they are given unto him: therefore is he justified. But if one, or either of the ten virgins, after she is espoused, shall be with another man, she has committed adultery, and shall be destroyed; for they are given unto him to multiply and replenish the earth, according to my commandment, and to fulfil the promise which was given by my Father before the foundation of the world, and for their exaltation in the eternal worlds, that they may bear the souls of men; for herein is the work of my Father continued, that he may be glorified.

25. And again, verily, verily, I say unto you, if any man have a wife who holds the keys of this power, and he teaches unto her the law of my priesthood as pertaining to these things, then shall she believe, and administer unto him, or she shall be destroyed, saith the Lord your God; for I will destroy her; for I will magnify my name upon all those who receive and abide in my law. Therefore, it shall be lawful in me, if she receive not this law, for him to receive all things whatsoever I, the Lord his God, will give unto him, because she did not believe and administer unto him, according to my word; and she then becomes the transgressor, and he is exempt from the law of Sarah, who administered unto Abraham according to the law, when I commanded Abraham to take Hagar to wife. And

now, as pertaining to this law: Verily, verily, I say unto you, I will reveal more unto you hereafter; therefore let this suffice for the present. Behold, I am Alpha and Omega. Amen.

## Excursus II

# PLURALITY OF WIVES FROM MORMON POINT OF VIEW

## II. PLURALITY OF WIVES FROM MORMON POINT OF VIEW

Following the revelation is this explanation describing the Mormon attitude towards polygamy:—

PLURALITY OF WIVES is a doctrine very popular among most of mankind at the present day. It is practised by the most powerful nations of Asia and Africa, and by numerous nations inhabiting the islands of the sea, and by the aboriginal nations of the great Western Hemisphere. The one-wife system is confined principally to a few small nations inhabiting Europe, and to those who are of European origin inhabiting America. It is estimated by the most able historians of our day, that about four-fifths of the population of the globe believe and practise, according to their respective laws, the doctrine of a Plurality of Wives. If the popularity of a doctrine is in proportion to the numbers who believe in it, then it follows that the *Plurality system* is four times more popular among

the inhabitants of the earth than the *one-wife* system.

Those nations who practise the Plurality doctrine consider it as virtuous and as right for one man to have many wives as to have one only. Therefore, they have enacted laws, not only giving this right to their citizens, but also protecting them in it, and punishing all those who infringe upon the chastity of the marriage covenant by committing adultery with any one of the wives of his neighbor. Those nations do not consider it possible for a man to commit adultery with any one of those women to whom he has been legally married according to their laws. The posterity raised up unto the husband through each of his wives are all considered to be legitimate, and provisions are made in their laws for those children, the same as if they were the children of one wife. Adulteries, fornications, and all unvirtuous conduct between the sexes, are severely punished by them. Indeed, Plurality among them is considered not only virtuous and right, but a great check or preventative against adulteries and unlawful connections, which are among the greatest evils with which nations are cursed, producing a vast amount of suffering and misery, devastation and death; undermining the very foundations of happiness, and destroying the frame-work of society, and the peace of the domestic circle.

Some of the nations of Europe who believe in

the one-wife system, have actually forbidden a plurality of wives by their laws; and the consequences are that the whole country among them is overrun with the most abominable practices; adulteries and unlawful connections prevail through all their villages, towns, cities, and country places, to a most fearful extent. And among some of these nations these sinks of wickedness, wretchedness, and misery, are licensed by law; while their piety would be wonderfully shocked to authorize by law the Plurality system, as adopted by many neighboring nations.

The Constitution and laws of the United States, being founded upon the principles of freedom, do not interfere with marriage relations, but leave the nation free to believe in and practise the doctrine of a Plurality of wives, or to confine themselves to the one-wife system, just as they choose. This is as it should be: it leaves the conscience of man untrammeled, and so long as he injures no person, and does not infringe upon the rights of others, he is free by the Constitution to marry one wife, or many, or none at all, and becomes accountable to God for the righteousness or unrighteousness of his domestic relations.

The Constitution leaves the several States and Territories to enact such laws as they see proper in regard to marriages, provided that they do not infringe upon the rights of conscience and the liberties guaranteed in that sacred document.

Therefore, if any State or Territory feels disposed to enact laws guaranteeing to each of its citizens the right to marry many wives, such laws would be perfectly constitutional; hence, the several States and Territories practise the one-wife system out of choice, and not because they are under any obligations so to do by the National Constitution. Indeed, we doubt very much whether any State or Territory has the constitutional right to make laws prohibiting the Plurality doctrine in cases where it is practised by religious societies, as a matter of conscience or as a doctrine of their religious faith. The first Article of the Amendments to the Constitution says, expressly, that "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or *prohibiting the free exercise thereof*." Now, if even Congress itself has no power to pass a law "prohibiting the free exercise of religion," much less has any State or Territory power to pass such an Act.

The doctrine of a Plurality of Wives was believed and practised by Abraham, the father of the faithful; and we find that while in this practice the angels of God frequently ministered to him, and at one time dined with him; and God manifested Himself to him, and entered into familiar conversation with him. Neither God nor His Angels reproved Abraham for being a polygamist, but on the contrary, the Almighty greatly blessed him and made promises unto him, concerning both Isaac

and Ishmael, clearly showing that Abraham practised what is called polygamy, under the sanction of the Almighty. Now if the father of the faithful was thus blessed, certainly it should not be considered irreligious for the faithful, who are called his children, to walk in the steps of their father Abraham. Indeed, if the Lord Himself, through His holy prophets, should give more wives unto His servants, as He gave them unto the prophet David, it would be a great sin for them to refuse that which He gives. In such a case, it would become a matter of conscience with them, and a part of their religion, and they would be bound to exercise their faith in this doctrine, and practice it, or be condemned; therefore, Congress would have no power to prohibit the free exercise of this part of their religion; neither would the States or Territories have power, constitutionally, to pass a law "prohibiting the free exercise thereof." Now a certain religious society, called Shakers, believe it to be wrong for them to marry even one wife; it certainly would be unconstitutional for either the Congress or the States to pass a law, compelling all people to marry at a certain age, because it would infringe upon the rights of conscience among the Shakers, and they would be prohibited the free exercise of their religion.

From the foregoing revelation, given through Joseph the Seer, it will be seen that God has actually commanded some of His servants to take

more wives, and has pointed out certain duties in regard to the marriage ceremony, showing that they must be married for time and for all eternity, and showing the advantages to be derived in a future state by this eternal union and showing still further, that, if they refused to obey this command, after having the law revealed to them, they should be damned. This revelation, then, makes it a matter of conscience among all the Latter Day Saints; and they embrace it as a part and portion of their religion, and verily believe that they cannot be saved and reject it. Has Congress power, then, to pass laws "prohibiting" the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints "*the free exercise*" of this article of their religion Have any of the States or Territories a constitutional right to pass laws "prohibiting the free exercise of the religion" which the Church of the Saints conscientiously and sincerely believe to be essential to their salvation? No: they have no such right.

The Latter Day Saints have the most implicit confidence in all the revelations given through Joseph the Prophet; and they would much sooner lay down their lives and suffer martyrdom than to deny the least revelation that was ever given to him. In one of the revelations through him, we read that God raised up wise men and inspired them to write the Constitution of our country, that the freedom of the people might be maintained, according to the free agency which He had given

to them; that every man might be accountable to God and not to man, so far as religious doctrines and conscience are concerned. And the more we examine that sacred instrument, framed by the wisdom of our illustrious fathers, the more we are compelled to believe that an invisible power controlled, dictated, and guided them in laying the foundation of liberty and freedom upon this great Western Hemisphere. To this land the Mahomedan —the Hindoo—the Chinese can emigrate, and each bring with him his score of wives and his hundred children, and the glorious Constitution of our country will not interfere with his domestic relations. Under the broad banner of the Constitution, he is protected in all his family associations; none have a right to tear any of his wives or his children from him. So, likewise, under the broad folds of the Constitution, the Legislative Assembly of the Territory of Utah have the right to pass laws regulating their matrimonial relations and protecting each of their citizens in the right of marrying one or many wives, as the case may be. If Congress should repeal those laws, they could not do so on the ground of their being unconstitutional. And even if Congress should repeal them, there still would be no law in Utah prohibiting the free exercise of that religious right: neither do the citizens of Utah feel disposed to pass such an unconstitutional act which would infringe upon the most sacred right of conscience.

Tradition and custom have great influence over nations. Long established customs, whether right or wrong, become sacred in the estimation of mankind. Those nations who have been accustomed from time immemorial to the practice of what is called polygamy, would consider a law abolishing it as the very height of injustice and oppression; the very idea of being limited to the one-wife system would be considered not only oppressive and unjust, but absolutely absurd and ridiculous; it would be considered an innovation upon the long established usages, customs, and laws of numerous and powerful nations; an innovation of the most dangerous character, calculated to destroy the most sacred rights and privileges of family associations —to upset the very foundations of individual rights, rendered dear and sacred by being handed down to them from the most remote ages of antiquity.

On the other hand, the European nations who have been for centuries restricted by law to the one-wife theory, would consider it a shocking innovation upon the customs of their fathers to abolish their restrictive laws, and to give freedom and liberty, according to the plurality system. It is custom, then, in a great degree, that forms the conscience of nations and individuals in regard to the marriage relationships. Custom causes four-fifths of the population of the globe to decide that polygamy, as it is called, is a good, and not an evil

practice; custom causes the balance, or the remaining fifth, to decide in opposition to the great majority.

Those individuals who have strength of mind sufficient to divest themselves entirely from the influence of custom, and examine the doctrine of a Plurality of Wives, under the light of Reason and Revelation, will be forced to the conclusion that it is a doctrine of Divine origin; that it was embraced and practised under the Divine sanction, by the most righteous men who ever lived on the earth: holy Prophets and Patriarchs, who were inspired by the Holy Ghost—who were enwrapt in the visions of the Almighty—who conversed with holy angels—who saw God face to face, and talked with Him as a man talks with his friend—were "Polygamists," that is, they had many wives—raised up many children by them—and were never reproved by the Holy Ghost, nor by angels, nor by the Almighty, for believing in and practising such a doctrine; on the contrary, each one of these "Polygamists" received by revelation, promises and blessings, for himself, for his wives, and for his numerous children, born unto him by his numerous wives. Moreover, the Lord himself gave revelation to different wives belonging to the same man, revealing to them the great blessings which should rest upon their posterity; angels also were sent to comfort and bless them; and in no instance do we find them reproved for having joined themselves in

marriage to a "Polygamist." Indeed, the Lord himself gave laws, not to prohibit "Polygamy," but showing His will in relation to the children raised up by the different wives of the same man; and furthermore, the Lord himself actually officiated in giving David all the wives of Saul; this occurred too when David already had several wives which he had previously taken: therefore, as the Lord did actually give into David's own bosom all the wives of Saul, He must not only have sanctioned "Polygamy," but established and instituted it upon a sure foundation, by giving the wives himself, the same as he gave Eve to Adam. Therefore, those who are completely divested from the influence of national customs, and who judge concerning this matter by the word of God, are compelled to believe that the Plurality of Wives was once sanctioned, for many ages, by the Almighty; and by a still further research of the Divine oracles, they find no intimations that this Divine institution was ever repealed. It was an institution, not originated under the law of Moses, but it was of a far more ancient date; and instead of being abolished by that law, it was sanctioned and perpetuated: and when Christ came to fufil that law, and to do it away by the introduction of a better covenant. He did not abolish the plurality system: not being originated under that law, it was not made null and void when that law was done away. Indeed there were many things in connection with the law

that were not abolished when the law was fulfilled; as, for instance, the ten commandments which the people under the Gospel covenant were still obliged to obey; and until we can find some law of God abolishing and prohibiting a Plurality of Wives, we are compelled to believe it a Divine institution; and we are, furthermore, compelled to believe, that if this institution be entered into now, under the same principles which governed the Holy Prophets and Patriarchs, that God will approbate it now as much as He did then; and that the persons who do thus practise it conscientiously and sincerely, are just as honorable in the sight of God as those who have but one wife. And that which is honorable before God should be honorable before men: and no one should be despised when he acts in all good conscience upon any principle of doctrine; neither should there be laws in any of these States or Territories to compel any individual to act in violation to the dictates of his own conscience; but every one should be left in all matters of religion to his own choice, and thus become accountable to God, and not to his fellow-man.

If the people of this country have generally formed different conclusions from us upon this subject; and if they have embraced religions which are more congenial to their minds than the religion of the Saints, we say to them that they are welcome to their own religious views; the laws

should not interfere with the exercise of their religious rights. If we cannot convince you by reason nor by the word of God, that your religion is wrong, we will not persecute you, but will sustain you in the privileges guaranteed in the great Charter of American Liberty: we ask from you the same generosity—protect us in the exercise of our religious rights—convince us of our errors of doctrine, if we have any, by reason, by logical arguments, or by the word of God, and we will be ever grateful for the information, and you will ever have the pleasing reflection that you have been the instruments in the hands of God of redeeming your fellow-beings from the darkness which you may see enveloping their minds. Come, then, let us reason together, and try to discover the true light upon all subjects connected with our temporal or eternal happiness; and if we disagree in our judgments, let us impute it to the weakness and imperfections of our fallen natures, and let us pity each other, and endeavor with patience and meekness to reclaim from error, and save the immortal soul from an endless death.

Mormonism, it will be observed, claims at once to be like Christianity a progressive faith, with that development of spiritualism which the "Tracts for the Times" exemplified, and like El Islam, to be a restoration by revelation of the pure and primæval religion of the world. Convinced that plurality was unforbidden by the founders of the for-

mer faiths, the Mormons, as well as the followers of the Arabian prophet, have obeyed the command of their God to restore it, and that too although the Anglo-Scandinavian race* everywhere agrees, after the fashion of pagan and monogamic Rome to make it a common law crime. Politically considered, the Mormons deem it necessary to their existence as a people. Contrary to the scientific modern economists, from Mr. Malthus to Mr. Mill, they hold population, not wealth, learning, civilization, nor virtue, to be the strength of a nation; they believe that numbers decide the rise and fall of empires, and that, as nature works the extinction of her doomed races by infecundity, and as the decline of a people's destiny is first detected in the diminution of its census, so they look upon the celestial promises of fertility made to the patriarchs of old, as the highest temporal blessing. They admit in the lawgiver only a right to legislate for the good of those who are to obey his laws, not to gratify his "whimsy whamsies," and that the liberty which man claims by the dignity of his nature,

* The word is proposed by Dr. Norton Shaw, Secretary to the Royal Geographical Society, and should be generally adopted. Anglo-Saxon is to Anglo-Scandinavian what Indo-Germanic is to Indo-European; both serve to humor the absurd pretensions of claimants whose principal claim to distinction is pretentiousness. The coupling of England with Saxony suggests to my memory a toast once proposed after a patriotic and fusional political feed in the Isle of the Knights — "Malta and England united can conquer the world."

permits him to choose the tie, whether polyandric, monogamic, or polygamic, that connects him with the opposite sex. Mr. Parley P. Pratt ("Marriage and Morals in Utah," p. 3) is explicit upon this subject.

"If we find laws, statutes, covenants, and precedents emanating from God; sworn to by himself to be everlasting; as a blessing to all nations:—if we find these have to do with exceeding multiplicity of race, and with family and national organization and increase;—if such institutions are older than Moses, and are found perpetuated and unimpaired by Moses, and the Prophets, Jesus and the Apostles, then it will appear evident that no merely human legislation or authority, whether proceeding from emperor, king, or people, has a right to change, alter, or pervert them."

## Excursus III

# SIR RICHARD BURTON ON THE MOTIVES OF POLYGAMY

## III. SIR RICHARD BURTON ON THE MOTIVES OF POLYGAMY

It will, I suppose, be necessary to supply a popular view of the "peculiar institution," at once the bane and blessing of Mormonism—plurality. I approach the subject with a feeling of despair, so conflicting are opinions concerning it, and so difficult is it to naturalize in Europe the customs of Asia, Africa, and America, or to reconcile the habits of the 19th century A.D. with those of 1900 B.C. A return to the patriarchal ages, we have seen, has its disadvantages.

There is a prevailing idea, especially in England, and even the educated are laboring under it, that the Mormons are Communists or Socialists of Plato's, Cicero's, Mr. Owen's and M. Cabet's school; that wives are in public, and that a woman can have as many husbands as the husband can have wives—in fact, to speak colloquially, that they "all pig together." The contrary is notably the case. The man who, like Messrs. Hamilton and Howard

Egan, murders, in cold blood, his wife's lover, is invariably acquitted, the jury declaring that civil damages mark the rottenness of other governments, and that "the principle, the only one that beats and throbs through the heart of the *entire inhabitants*(!) of this Territory, is simply this: *The man who seduces his neighbor's wife must die, and her nearest relation must kill him.*" Men, like Dr. Vaughan and Mr. Monroe, slain for the mortal sin, perish for their salvation; the Prophet, were they to lay their lives at his feet, would, because unable to hang or behead them, counsel them to seek certain death in a righteous cause as an expiatory sacrifice;* which may save their souls alive. Their two mortal sins are: 1. Adultery; 2. Shedding innocent blood.

This severity of punishing an offence, which modern and civilized society looks upon rather in the light of a sin than of a crime, is clearly based upon the Mosaic code. It is also, *lex loci,* the "common mountain law," a "religious and social custom," and a point of personal honor. Another idea underlies it: the Mormons hold, like the Hebrews of old, "children of shame" in extreme dishonor. They quote the command of God, Deuteronomy (xxiii, 2), "a momzer shall not enter

* The form of death has yet to be decided. They call this a scriptural practice, viz., "to deliver such a one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus Christ." (1 Cor. v, 5.)

into the Church of the Lord, till the tenth generation," and ask when the order was repealed. They would expel all impurity from the Camp of Zion, and they adopt every method of preventing what they consider a tremendous evil, viz., the violation of God's temple in their own bodies.

The marriage ceremony is performed in the temple, or, that being impossible, in Mr. Brigham Young's office, properly speaking by the Prophet, who can, however, depute any follower, as Mr. Heber Kimball, a simple apostle, or even an elder, to act for him. When mutual consent is given, the parties are pronounced man and wife, in the name of Jesus Christ, prayers follow, and there is a patriarchal feast of joy in the evening.

The first wife, as among polygamists generally, is *the* wife, and assumes the husband's name and title. Her "plurality-"partners are called sisters —such as sister Anne or sister Blanche—and are the aunts of her children. The first wife is married for time, the others are sealed for eternity. Hence, according to the Mormons, arose the Gentile calumny concerning spiritual wifedom, which they distinctly deny. Girls rarely remain single past sixteen—in England the average marrying age is thirty—and they would be the pity of the community, if they were doomed to a waste of youth so unnatural.

Divorce is rarely obtained by the man who is ashamed to own that he cannot keep his house in

order; some, such as the President, would grant it only in case of adultery; wives, however, are allowed to claim it for cruelty, desertion, or neglect. Of late years, Mormon women married to Gentiles are cut off from the society of the Saints, and without uncharitableness men suspect a sound previous reason. The widows of the Prophet are married to his successor, as David took unto himself the wives of Saul; being generally aged, they occupy the position of matron rather than wife, and the same is the case when a man espouses a mother and her daughter.

It is needless to remark how important a part matrimony plays in the history of an individual, and of that aggregate of individuals, a people; or how various and conflicting has been Christian practice concerning it, from the double marriage, civil and religious, the former temporary, the latter permanent, of the Coptic or Abyssinian church, to the exaggerated purity of Mistress Anne Lee, the mother of the Shakers, who exacted complete continence in a state established according to the first commandment, *crescite et multiplicamini*. The literalism with which the Mormons have interpreted Scripture has led them directly to polygamy. The texts promising to Abraham a progeny numerous as the stars above or the sand below, and that "in his seed (a polygamist) all the families of the earth shall be blessed," induce them, his descendants, to seek a similar blessing. The theory

announcing that "the man is not without the woman, nor the woman without the man," is by them interpreted into an absolute command that both sexes should marry, and that a woman cannot enter the heavenly kingdom without a husband to introduce her. A virgin's end is annihilation or absorption, *nox est perpetua una dormienda;* and as baptism for the dead—an old rite, revived and founded upon the writings of St. Paul quoted in the last chapter,—has been made a part of practice, vicarious marriage for the departed also enters into the Mormon scheme. Like certain British dissenters of the royal burgh of Dundee, who in our day petitioned parliament for permission to bigamize, the Mormons, with Bossuet and others, see in the New Testament no order against plurality;* and in the Old dispensation they find the practice sanctioned in a family, ever the friends of God, and out of which the Redeemer sprang. Finally, they find throughout the nations of the earth, three polygamists in theory to one monogamist.

The "chaste and plural marriage" being once legalized, finds a multitude of supporters. The

* So, in 1539, the Landgrave Philip of Hesse, wishing to marry a second wife while the first was alive, was permitted to "commit bigamy" by the eminent reformers, M. Luther, Kuhorn (M. Bucer), Melanchthon, and others, with the sole condition of secrecy. In the present age, the Right Rev. J. W. Colenso, D.D. and Bishop of Natal, "not only tolerates polygamy in converts, but defends it on the ground of religion and humanity."

anti-Mormons declare that it is at once fornication and adultery—a sin which absorbs all others. The Mormons point triumphantly to the austere morals of their community, their superior freedom from maladive influences, and the absence of that uncleanness and licentiousness which distinguish the cities of the civilized world. They boast that if it be an evil they have at least chosen the lesser evil, that they practise openly as a virtue what others do secretly as a sin—how full is society of these latent Mormons!—that their plurality has abolished the necessity of concubinage, cryptogamy, contubernium, celibacy, *mariages du treizième arrondissement*, with their terrible consequences, infanticide, and so forth; that they have removed their ways from those "whose end is bitter as wormwood, and sharp as a two-edged sword." Like its sister institution Slavery, the birth and growth of a similar age, Polygamy acquires *vim* by abuse and detraction; the more turpitude is heaped upon it, the brighter and more glorious it appears to its votaries.

There are rules and regulations of Mormonism —I cannot say whether they date before or after the heavenly command to pluralize—which disprove the popular statement that such marriages are made to gratify licentiousness, and which render polygamy a positive necessity. All sensuality in the married state is strictly forbidden beyond the requisite for ensuring progeny,—the practice,

in fact, of Adam and Abraham. During the gestation and nursing of children, the strictest continence on the part of the mother is required—rather for a hygienic than for a religious reason. The same custom is practised in part by the Jews, and in whole by some of the noblest tribes of savages; the splendid physical development of the Kaffir race in South Africa is attributed by some authors to a rule of continence like that of the Mormons, and to a lactation prolonged for two years.

The anomaly of such a practice in the midst of modern civilization is worthy of a place in Balzac's great repertory of morbid anatomy; it is only to be equalled by the exceptional nature of the Mormon's position, his past fate and his future prospects. Spartan-like the Faith wants a race of warriors, and it adopts the best means to obtain them.

Besides religious and physiological, there are social motives for the plurality. As in the days of Abraham, the lands about New Jordan are broad and the people few. Of the three forms that unite the sexes, polygamy increases, whilst monogamy balances, and polyandry diminishes progeny. The former, as Montesquieu acutely suggested, acts inversely to the latter, by causing a preponderance of female over male births. "*Un fait important à noter*," says M. Remy, "*c'est qu'il y a en Utah beaucoup plus de naissances de filles que de garçons,*

*résultat opposé à ce qu'on observe dans tous les pays où la monogamie est pratiquée, et parfaitement conforme à ce qu'on a remarqué chez les polygames Mussulmans.*" M. Remy's statement is as distinctly affirmed by Mr. Hyde, the Mormon apostate.

In the East, where the census is utterly unknown, we can judge of the relative proportions of the sexes only by the families of the great and wealthy, who invariably practise polygamy, and we find the number of daughters mostly superior to that of sons, except where female infanticide deludes the public into judging otherwise. In lands where polyandry is the rule, for instance, in the Junsar and Bawur pergunnahs of the Dhun, there is a striking discrepancy in the proportions of the sexes among young children as well as adults; thus, in a village where 400 boys are found there will be 120 girls, and on the other hand, in the Gurhwal Hills, where polygamy is prevalent, there is a surplus of female children. The experienced East Indian official who has published this statement,* is "inclined to give more weight to nature's adaptability to national habit than to the possibility of infanticide," for which there are no reasons. If these be facts, Nature then has made provision for polygamy and polyandry: our plas-

* Hunting in the Himalaya, by R. H. W. Dunlop, C.B., B.C.S., F.R.G.S., London, Richard Bentley, 1860.

tic mother has prepared her children to practise them all.

Even in Scotland modern statisticians have observed that the proportion of boys born to girls is greater in the rural districts; and attributing the phenomenon to the physical weakening of the parents, have considered it a rule so established as to "afford a valuable hint to those who desire male progeny." The anti-Mormons are fond of quoting Paley:—"it is not the question whether one man will have more children by five wives, but whether these five women would not have had more children if they had each a husband." The Mormons reply that—setting aside the altered rule of production — their colony, unlike all others, numbers more female than male immigrants; consequently that, without polygamy, part of the social field would remain untilled.

To the unprejudiced traveler it appears that polygamy is the rule where population is required, and where the great social evil has not had time to develop itself. In Paris or London the institution would, like slavery, die a natural death; in Arabia and in the wilds of the Rocky Mountains it maintains a strong hold upon the affections of mankind. Monogamy is best fitted for the large, wealthy, and flourishing communities in which man is rarely the happier because his quiver is full of children, and where the Hetæra becomes the

succedaneum of the "plurality-wife." Polyandry has been practised principally by priestly and barbarous tribes* who fear most for the increase of their numbers, which would end by driving them to honest industry. It reappears in a remarkable manner in the highest state of social civilization, where excessive expenditure is an obstacle to freehold property, and the practice is probably on the increase.

The other motive for polygamy in Utah is economy. Servants are rare and costly; it is cheaper and more comfortable to marry them. Many converts are attracted by the prospect of becoming wives, especially from places where, like Clifton, there are sixty-four females to thirty-six males. The old maid is, as she ought to be, an unknown entity. Life in the wilds of Western America is a course of severe toil: a single woman cannot perform the manifold duties of housekeeping, cooking, scrubbing, washing, darning, child-bearing, and nursing a family. A division of labor is

* The Mahabharata thus relates the origin of the practice in India. The five princely Pandava brothers, when contending for a prize offered by the King of Drona, to the most successful archer, agreed to divide it if any of them should prove the winner. Arjun, the eldest, was declared victor and received in gift Draupadi, the King's daughter, who thus became the joint-stock property of the whole fraternity. They lived *en famille* for some years at the foot of Bairath, the remains of which, or rather a Ghoorka structure on the same site, are still visible on a hill near the N.W. corner of the Dhun. (Hunting in the Himalaya, chap. vii.)

necessary, and she finds it by acquiring a sisterhood. Throughout the States whenever a woman is seen at manual or outdoor work, one is certain that she is Irish, German, or Scandinavian. The delicacy and fragility of the Anglo-American female nature is at once the cause and the effect of this exemption from toil.

The moral influence diffused over social relations by the presence of polygyny will be intelligible only to those who have studied the workings of the system in lands where seclusion is practised in its modified form, as amongst the Syrian Christians. In America society splits into two parts—man and woman—even more readily than in England, each sex is freer and happier in the company of it congeners.

At Great Salt Lake City there is an air of gloom, like that which the late Professor H. H. Wilson described as being cast by the invading Moslem over the innocent gaiety of the primitive Hindu. The choice egotism of the heart called Love, that is to say, the propensity elevated by sentiment, and not undirected by reason, subsides into a calm and unimpassioned domestic attachment: romance and reverence are transferred, with the true Morman concentration, from Love and Liberty to Religion and the Church. The consent of the first wife to a rival is seldom refused, and a *ménage à trois*, in the Mormon sense of the phrase, is fatal to the development of that tender tie which must be

confined to two. In its stead there is household comfort, affection, circumspect friendship, and domestic discipline. Womanhood is not petted and spoiled as in the Eastern States; the inevitable cyclical revolution, indeed, has rather placed her below par, where, however, I believe her to be happier than when set upon an uncomfortable and unnatural eminence.

It will be asked what view does the softer sex take of polygyny? A few, mostly from the old country, lament that Mr. Joseph Smith ever asked of the Creator that question which was answered in the affirmative. A very few, like the Curia Electa, Emma, the first wife of Mr. Joseph Smith —who said of her, by-the-bye, that she could not be contented in heaven without rule—apostatize, and become Mrs. Bridemann. The many are, as might be expected of the easily molded weaker vessel, which proves its inferior position by the delicate flattery of imitation, more in favor of polygyny than the stronger.

For the attachment of the women of the Saints to the doctrine of plurality there are many reasons. The Mormon prophets have expended all their arts upon this end, well knowing that without the hearty co-operation of mothers and wives, sisters and daughters, no institution can live long. They have bribed them with promises of Paradise—they have subjugated them with threats of annihilation. With them once a Mormon always a Mormon. I

have said that a modified reaction respecting the community of Saints has set in throughout the States; people no longer wonder that their missionaries do not show horns and cloven feet, and the Federal officer, the itinerant politician, the platform orator, and the place-seeking demagogue, can no longer make political capital by bullying, oppressing, and abusing them. The tide has turned, and will turn yet more. But the individual still suffers: the apostate Mormon is looked upon by other people as a scamp or a knave, and the woman worse than a prostitute. Again, all the fervor of a new faith burns in their bosoms, with a heat which we can little appreciate, and the revelation of Mr. Joseph Smith is considered on this point as superior to the Christian as the latter is in others to the Mosaic Dispensation. Polygamy is a positive command from heaven: if the flesh is mortified by it *tant mieux*—"no Cross, no Crown;" "blessed are they that mourn." I have heard these words from the lips of a well-educated Mormon woman who, in the presence of a Gentile sister, urged her husband to take unto himself a second wife.

The average Mormon household has been vividly described by its enemies as a hell of envy, hatred, and malice—a den of murder and suicide. The same has been said of the Moslem harem. Both, I believe, suffer from the assertions of prejudice or ignorance. The temper of the new is so far

superior to that of the old country, that, incredible as the statement may appear, rival wives do dwell together in amity; and do quote the proverb "the more the merrier." Moreover, they look with horror at the position of the "slavey" of a pauper mechanic, at being required to "nigger it" upon love and starvation, and at the necessity of a numerous family. They know that nine-tenths of the miseries of the poor in large cities arise from early and imprudent marriages, and they would rather be the fiftieth "sealing" of Dives than the toilsome single wife of Lazarus.

The worldly-wise proverb common among the French concerning motherhood—"*le premier embellit, le second détruit, le troisième gâte tout,*" is true in the Western World. The first child is welcomed, the second is tolerated, the third is the cause of tears and reproaches, and the fourth, if not prevented by gold pills, or some similar monstrosity, causes temper, spleen, and melancholy, with disgust and hatred of the cause. What the Napoleonic abolition of the law of primogeniture, combined with centralization of the peasant class in towns and cities, has effected on this side of the Channel, the terrors of maternity, aggravated by a highly nervous temperament, small cerebellum, constitutional frigidity, and extreme delicacy of fibre have brought to pass in many of the older parts of the Union.

Another curious effect of fervent belief may be

noticed in the married state. When a man has four or five wives with reasonable families by each, he is fixed for life: his interests, if not his affections, bind him irrevocably to his New Faith. But the bachelor, as well as the monogamic youth, is prone to backsliding. Apostasy is apparently so common that many of the new Saints form a mere floating population. He is proved by a mission before being permitted to marry, and even then women, dreading a possible renegade with the terrible consequences of a heavenless future to themselves, are shy of saying yes. Thus it happens that male celibacy is mixed up in a curious way with polygyny; and that also in a Faith whose interpreter advises youth not to remain single after sixteen, nor girls after fourteen. The celibacy also is absolute; any infraction of it would be dangerous to life. Either then the first propensity of the phrenologist is poorly developed in these lands—this has been frequently and positively stated of the ruder sex in California—or its action is to be regulated by habit to a far greater degree than is usually believed.

I am conscious that my narrative savors of incredibility: the fault is in the subject, not in the narrator. *Exoneravi animam meam.* The best proof that my opinions are correct will be the following quotation. It is a letter addressed to a sister in New Hampshire by a Mrs. Belinda M. Pratt, the wife of the celebrated apostle. M. Remy has appar-

ently dramatized it (vol. ii, chap. ii) by casting it into dialogue form, and placing it in the mouth of *une femme distinguée.* Most readers, feminine and monogamic, will remark that the lady shows little heart, or natural affection; the severe calm of her judgment and reasoning faculties and the soundness of her physiology cannot be doubted.

## Excursus IV

# LETTER FROM A MORMON'S WIFE IN FAVOR OF POLYGAMY

## IV. LETTER FROM A MORMON'S WIFE IN FAVOR OF POLYGAMY

*Great Salt Lake City, Jan.* 12, 1854.

DEAR SISTER,—Your letter of Oct. 2 was received only yesterday. My joy on its reception was more than I can express. I had waited so long for your answer to our last, that I had almost concluded my friends were offended, and would write to me no more. Judge, then, of my joy when I read the sentiments of friendship and of sisterly affection expressed in your letter.

We are all well here, and are prosperous and happy in our family circle. My children, four in number, are healthy and cheerful, and fast expanding their physical and intellectual faculties. Health, peace, and prosperity have attended us all the day long.

It seems, my dear sister, that we are no nearer together in our religious views than formerly. Why is this? Are we not all bound to leave this world, with all we possess therein, and reap the reward

of our doings *here* in a never-ending hereafter? If so, do we not desire to be undeceived, and to *know and to do the truth?* Do we not all wish in our very hearts to be sincere with ourselves, and to be honest and frank with each other?

If so, you will bear with me patiently, while I give a few of my reasons for embracing, and holding sacred, that particular point in the doctrine of the Church of the Saints to which you, my dear sister, together with a large majority of Christendom, so decidedly object. I mean, a "*plurality of wives.*"

I have a Bible, which I have been taught from my infancy to hold sacred. In this Bible, I read of a holy man named Abraham, who is represented as the friend of God, a faithful man in all things, a man who kept the commandments of God, and who is called, in the New Testament, "the father of the faithful." See James ii, 23; Rom. iv, 16; Gal. iii, 8, 9, 16, 29.

I find this man had a plurality of wives, some of which were called concubines. See Book of Genesis; and for his concubines, see xxv, 6.

I also find his grandson Jacob possessed of four wives, twelve sons, and a daughter. These wives are spoken very highly of, by the sacred writers, as honorable and virtuous women. "*These,*" say the Scriptures, "*did build the house of Israel.*"

Jacob himself was also a man of God, and the Lord blessed him and his house, and commanded

him to be fruitful and multiply. See Gen. xxx to xxxv and particularly xxxv, 10, 11.

I find also that the twelve sons of Jacob, by these four wives, became princes, heads of tribes, patriarchs, whose names are had in everlasting remembrance to all generations.

Now God talked with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob frequently; and His angels also visited and talked with them, and blessed them and their wives and children. He also reproved the sins of some of the sons of Jacob, for hating and selling their brother, and for adultery. But in all His communications with them, He never condemned their family organization; but, on the contrary, always approved of it, and blessed them in this respect. He even told Abraham that He would make him the father of many nations, and that in him and his seed all the nations and kindreds of the earth should be blessed. See Genesis xviii, 17-19; also xii, 1-3. In later years I find the plurality of wives perpetuated, sanctioned, and provided for in the law of Moses.

David the Psalmist not only had a plurality of wives, but the Lord Himself spoke by the mouth of Nathan the Prophet, and told David that *He* (the Lord) had given his master's wives into his bosom; but because he had committed adultery with the wife of Uriah, and had caused his murder, *He* would take *his* wives and give them to a neighbor of his, etc. See 2 Samuel xii, 7-11.

Here, then, we have the word of the Lord, not only sanctioning polygamy, but actually giving to king David the wives of his master (Saul), and afterward taking the wives of David from him, and giving them to another man. Here we have a sample of severe reproof and punishment for adultery and murder, while polygamy is authorized and approved by the word of God.

But to come to the New Testament. I find Jesus Christ speaks very highly of Abraham and his family. He says, "*Many shall come from the east, and from the west, and from the north, and from the south, and shall sit down with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, in the kingdom of God.*" Luke xiii, 28, 29.

Again he said, "*If ye were Abraham's seed, ye would do the works of Abraham.*"

Paul the Apostle wrote to the saints of his day, and informed them as follows: "As many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ; and if ye are Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise."

He also sets forth Abraham and Sarah as patterns of faith and good works, and as the father and mother of faithful Christians, who should, by faith and good works, aspire to be counted the sons of Abraham and daughters of Sarah.

Now let us look at some of the works of Sarah, for which she is so highly commended by the Apostles, and by them held up as a pattern for Christian ladies to imitate. "*Now Sarah, Abram's*

*wife, bare him no children; and she had a handmaid, an Egyptian, whose name was Hagar. And Sarah said unto Abram, Behold now, the Lord hath restrained me from bearing: I pray thee go in unto my maid: it may be that I may obtain children of her. And Abram hearkened unto the voice of Sarah. And Sarah, Abram's wife, took Hagar her maid, the Egyptian, after Abram had dwelt ten years in the land of Canaan, and gave her to her husband, Abram, to be his wife.*" See Genesis xvi, 1-3.

According to Jesus Christ and the Apostles, then, the only way to be saved is to be adopted into the great family of polygamists, by the Gospel, and then strictly follow their examples.

Again, John the Revelator describes the Holy City of the heavenly Jerusalem, with the names of the twelve sons of Jacob inscribed on the gates. Rev. xxi, 12.

To sum up the whole, then, I find that polygamists were the friends of God; that the family and lineage of a polygamist were selected, in which all nations should be blessed; that a polygamist is named in the New Testament as the father of the faithful Christians of after ages, and cited as a pattern for all generations; that the wife of a polygamist, who encouraged her husband in the practice of the same, and even urged him into it, and officiated in giving him another wife, is named as an honorable and virtuous woman, a pattern for

Christian ladies, and the very mother of all holy women in the Christian Church, whose aspiration it should be to be called her daughters; that Jesus Christ has declared that the great fathers of the polygamic family stand at the head in the kingdom of good; in short, that all the saved of after generations should be saved by becoming members of a polygamic family; that all those who do not become members of it are strangers and aliens to the covenant of promise, the commonwealth of Israel, and not heirs according to the promise made to Abraham; that all people from the east, west, north, or south, who enter into the kingdom, enter into the society of polygamists, and under their patriarchal rule and government; indeed, no one can even approach the gates of heaven without beholding the names of twelve polygamists (the sons of four different women by one man) engraven in everlasting glory upon the pearly gates.

My dear sister, with the Scriptures before me, I could never find it in my heart to reject the heavenly vision which has restored to man the fulness of the Gospel, or the Latter Day Prophets and Apostles, merely because in this restoration is included the ancient law of matrimony and of family organization and government, preparatory to the restoration of all Israel.

But, leaving all Scripture, history, or precedent out of the question, let us come to nature's law. What, then, appears to be the great object of the

marriage relations? I answer, the multiplying of our species, the rearing and training of children.

To accomplish this object, natural law would dictate that a husband should remain apart from his wife at certain seasons, which, in the very constitution of the female, are untimely; or, in other words, indulgence should be not merely for pleasure or wanton desires, but mainly for the purpose of procreation.

The mortality of nature would teach a mother, that, during nature's process in the formation and growth of embryo man, her heart should be pure, her thoughts and affections chaste, her mind calm, her passions without excitement, while her body should be invigorated with every exercise conducive to health and vigor, but by no means subjected to anything calculated to disturb, irritate, weary, or exhaust any of its functions.

And while a kind husband should nourish, sustain, and comfort the wife of his bosom by every kindness and attention consistent with her situation, and with his most tender affection; still he should refrain from all those untimely associations which are forbidden in the great constitutional laws of female nature; which laws we see carried out in almost the entire animal economy, human animals excepted.

Polygamy, then, as practised under the Patriarchal law of God, tends directly to the chastity of

women, and to sound health and morals in the constitutions of their offspring.

You can read, in the law of God, in your Bible, the times and circumstances under which a woman should remain apart from her husband, during which times she is considered unclean; and should her husband come to her bed under such circumstances, he would commit a gross sin both against the laws of nature and the wise provisions of God's law, as revealed in His word; in short, he would commit an abomination; he would sin both against his own body, against the body of his wife, and against the laws of procreation, in which the health and morals of his offspring are directly concerned.

The polygamic law of God opens to all vigorous, healthy, and virtuous females a door by which they may become honorable wives of virtuous men, and mothers of faithful, virtuous, healthy, and vigorous children.

And here let me ask you, my dear sister, what female in all New Hampshire would marry a drunkard, a man of hereditary disease, a debauchee, an idler, or a spendthrift; or what woman would become a prostitute, or, on the other hand, live and die single, or without forming those inexpressably dear relationships of wife and mother, if the Abrahamic covenant, or Patriarchal laws of God, were extended over your State, and held sacred and honorable by all?

Dear sister, in your thoughtlessness, you inquire,

"Why not a plurality of husbands as well as a plurality of wives?" To which I reply: 1st, God has never commanded or sanctioned a plurality of husbands; 2nd, "*Man is the head of the woman,*" and no woman can serve two lords; 3rd, Such an order of things would work death and not life, or, in plain language, it would multiply disease instead of children. In fact, the experiment of a plurality of husbands, or rather of one woman for many men, is in active operation, and has been, for centuries, in all the principal towns and cities of "*Christendom!*" It is the genius of "*Christian institutions,*" falsely so called. It is the result of "*Mystery Babylon, the great whore of all the earth.*" Or in other words, it is the result of making void the holy ordinances of God in relation to matrimony, and introducing the laws of Rome, in which the clergy and nuns are forbidden to marry, and other members only permitted to have one wife. This law leaves females exposed to a life of single "*blessedness,*" without husband, child, or friend to provide for or comfort them; or to a life of poverty and loneliness, exposed to temptation, to perverted affections, to unlawful means to gratify them, or to the necessity of selling themselves for lucre. While the man who has abundance of means is tempted to spend it on a mistress in secret, and in a lawless way, the law of God would have given her to him as an honorable wife. These circumstances give rise to murder, infanti-

cide, suicide, disease, remorse, despair, wretchedness, poverty, untimely death, with all the attendant train of jealousies, heartrending miseries, want of confidence in families, contaminating disease, etc.; and finally, to the horrible license system, in which governments, called Christian, license their fair daughters, I will not say to play the beast, but to a degradation far beneath them; for every species of the animal creation, except man, refrains from such abominable excesses, and observe in a great measure the laws of nature in procreation.

I again repeat, that nature has constituted the female differently from the male; and for a different purpose. The strength of the female constitution is designed to flow in a stream of *life*, to nourish and sustain the embryo, to bring it forth, and to nurse it on her bosom. When nature is not in operation within her in these particulars, and for these heavenly ends, it has wisely provided relief at regular periods, in order that her system may be kept pure and healthy, without exhausting the fountain of life on the one hand, or drying up its river of life on the other; till mature age, and an approaching change of worlds, render it necessary for her to cease to be fruitful, and give her to rest awhile, and enjoy a tranquil life in the midst of that family circle, endeared to her by so many ties, and which may be supposed, at this period of her life, to be approaching the vigor of manhood, and therefore able to comfort and sustain her.

Not so with man. He has no such drawback upon his strength. It is his to move in a wider sphere. If God shall count him worthy of a hundredfold, in this life, of wives and children, and houses, and lands, and kindreds, he may even aspire to Patriarchal sovereignty, to empire; to be the prince or head of a tribe, or tribes; and like Abraham of old, be able to send forth, for the defence of his country, hundreds and thousands of his own warriors, born in his own house.

A noble man of God, who is full of the Spirit of the Most High, and is counted worthy to converse with Jehovah, or with the Son of God; and to associate with angels, and the spirits of just men made perfect; one who will teach his children, and bring them up in the light of unadulterated and eternal truth; is more worthy of a hundred wives and children, than the ignorant slave of passion, or of vice and folly, is to have one wife and one child. Indeed the God of Abraham is so much better pleased with one than with the other, that he would even take away the one talent, which is habitually abused, neglected, or put to an improper use, and give it to him who has ten talents.

In the Patriarchal order of family government, the wife is bound to the law of her husband. She honors, "*calls him lord,*" even as Sarah obeyed and honored Abraham. She lives for him, and to increase his glory, his greatness, his kingdom, or

family. Her affections are centered in her God, her husband, and her children.

The children are also under his government, worlds without end. *"While life or thought, or being lasts, or immortality endures,"* they are bound to obey him as their father and king.

He also has a head, to whom he is responsible. He must keep the commandments of God, and observe His laws. He must not take a wife unless she is given to him by the law and authority of God. He must not commit adultery, nor take liberties with any woman except his own, who are secured to him by the holy ordinances of matrimony.

Hence a nation organized under the law of the Gospel, or in other words, the law of Abraham and the Patriarchs, would have no institutions tending to licentiousness; no adulteries, fornications, etc., would be tolerated. No houses or institutions would exist for traffic in shame, or in the lifeblood of our fair daughters. Wealthy men would have no inducement to keep a mistress in secret, or unlawfully. Females would have no grounds for temptation in any such lawless life. Neither money nor pleasure could tempt them, nor poverty drive them to any such excess; because the door would be open for every virtuous female to form the honorable and endearing relationships of wife and mother, in some virtuous family, where love, and peace, and plenty would crown her days, and truth

and the practice of virtue qualify her to be transplanted with her family circle in that eternal soil, where they might multiply their children, without pain, or sorrow, or death; and go on increasing in numbers, in wealth, in greatness, in glory, might, majesty, power, and dominion, in worlds without end.

O my dear sister! could the dark veil of tradition be rent from your mind! could you gaze for a moment on the resurrection of the just! could you behold Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and their wives and children, clad in the bloom, freshness, and beauty of immortal *flesh and bones;* clothed in robes of fine white linen, bedecked with precious stones and gold; and surrounded with an offspring of immortals as countless as the stars of the firmament, or as the grains of sand upon the sea shore; over which they reign as kings and queens for ever and ever! you would then know something of the weight of those words of the sacred writer which are recorded in relation to the four wives of Jacob, the mothers of the twelve Patriarchs, namely: *"These did build the house of Israel."*

O that my dear kindred could but realize that they have need to repent of the sins, ignorance, and traditions of those perverted systems which are misnamed *"Christianity,"* and be baptized—*buried* in the water, in the likeness of the death and burial of Jesus Christ, and rise to newness of life in the likeness of his resurrection; receive his

Spirit by the laying on of the hands of an Apostle, according to promise, and forsake the world and the pride thereof. Thus they would be adopted into the family of Abraham, become his sons and daughters, see and enjoy for themselves the visions of the Spirit of eternal truth, which bear witness of the family order of heaven, and the beauties and glories of eternal kindred ties; for my pen can never describe them.

Dear, *dear* kindred: remember, according to the New Testament, and the testimony of an ancient Apostle, if you are ever saved in the kingdom of God, it must be by being adopted into the family of polygamists—the family of the great Patriarch Abraham: for in his seed, or family, and not out of it, "*shall all the nations and kindreds of the earth be blessed.*"

You say you believe polygamy is "*licentiousness*"; that it is "*abominable*," "*beastly*," etc.; "the practice only of the most barbarous nations, or of the dark ages, or of some great or good men who were left to commit gross sins." Yet you say you are anxious for me to be converted to your faith; and that we may see each other in this life, and be associated in one great family in that life which has no end.

Now in order to comply with your wishes, I must renounce the Old and New Testaments; must count Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and their families, as licentious, wicked, beastly, abominable characters;

Moses, Nathan, David, and the Prophets, no better. I must look upon the God of Israel as partaker in all these abominations, by holding them in fellowship; and even as a minister of such iniquity, by giving king Saul's wives into king David's bosom; and afterwards by taking David's wives from him, and giving them to his neighbor. I must consider Jesus Christ, and Paul, and John, as either living in a dark age, as full of the darkness and ignorance of barbarous climes, or else wilfully abominable and wicked, in fellowshipping polygamists, and representing them as fathers of the faithful, and rulers in heaven. I must doom them all to hell, with adulterers, fornicators, etc., or else, at least, assign to them some nook or corner in heaven, as ignorant persons, who, knowing but little, were beaten with few stripes. While, by analogy, I must learn to consider the Roman Popes, clergy, and nuns, who do not marry at all, as foremost in the ranks of glory; and those Catholics and Protestants who have but one wife, as next in order of salvation, glory, immortality, and eternal life.

Now, dear friends, much as I long to see you, and dear as you are to me, I can never come to these terms. I feel as though the Gospel had introduced me into the right family, into the right lineage, and into good company. And besides all these considerations, should I ever become so beclouded with unbelief of the Scriptures and heav-

enly institutions, as to agree with my kindred in New Hampshire, in *theory*, still my practical circumstances are different, and would I fear continue to separate us by a wide and almost impassable gulf.

For instance, I have (as you see, in all good conscience, founded on the word of God) formed family and kindred ties, which are inexpressibly dear to me, and which I can never bring my feelings to consent to dissolve. I have a good and virtuous husband whom I love. We have four little children which are mutually and inexpressibly dear to us. And besides this my husband has seven other living wives, and one who has departed to a better world. He has in all upwards of twenty-five children. All these mothers and children are endeared to me by kindred ties, by mutual affection, by acquaintance and association; and the mothers in particular, by mutual and long-continued exercises of toil, patience, long-suffering, and sisterly kindness. We all have our imperfections in this life; but I know that these are good and worthy women, and that my husband is a good and worthy man; one who keeps the commandments of Jesus Christ, and presides in his family like an Abraham. He seeks to provide for them with all diligence; he loves them all, and seeks to comfort them and make them happy. He teaches them the commandments of Jesus Christ, and gathers them about him in the family circle to call upon his God, both

morning and evening. He and his family have the confidence, esteem, good-will, and fellowship of this entire territory, and of a wide circle of acquaintances in Europe and America. He is a practical teacher of morals and religion, a promoter of general education, and at present occupies an honorable seat in the Legislative Council of this territory.

Now, as to visiting my kindred in New Hampshire, I would be pleased to do so, were it the will of God. But first, the laws of that state must be so modified by enlightened legislation, and the customs and consciences of its inhabitants, and of my kindred, so altered, that my husband can accompany me with all his wives and children, and be as much respected and honored in his family organization, and in his holy calling, as he is at home; or in the same manner as the Patriarch Jacob would have been respected, had he, with his wives and children, paid a visit to his kindred. As my husband is yet in his youth, as well as myself, I fondly hope we shall live to see that day. For already the star of Jacob is in the ascendency; the house of Israel is about to be restored: while "*Mystery Babylon,*" with all her institutions, awaits her own overthrow. Till this is the case in New Hampshire, my kindred will be under the necessity of coming here to see us, or, on the other hand, we will be mutually compelled to forego the pleasure of each other's company.

You mention, in your letter, that Paul, the Apostle, recommended the Bishops be the husband of one wife. Why this was the case, I do not know, unless it was, as he says, that while he was among Romans he did as Romans did. Rome, at that time, governed the world, as it were; and although gross idolaters, they held to the one-wife system. Under these circumstances, no doubt, the Apostle Paul, seeing a great many polygamists in the Church, recommended that they had better choose for this particular temporal office, men of small families, who would not be in disrepute with the government. This is precisely our course in those countries where Roman institutions still bear sway. Our Elders there have but one wife, in order to conform to the laws of men.

You inquire why Elder W., when at your house, denied that the Church of this age held to the doctrine of plurality. I answer, that he might have been ignorant of the fact, as our belief on this point was not published till 1852. And had he known it, he had no right to reveal the same until the full time had arrived. God kindly withheld this doctrine for a time, because of the ignorance and prejudice of the nations of mystic Babylon, that peradventure he might save some of them.

Now, dear sister, I must close. I wish all my kindred and old acquaintances to see this letter, or a copy thereof; and that they will consider it as if written to themselves. I love them dearly.

and greatly desire and pray for their salvation, and that we may all meet with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of God.

Dear sister, do not let your prejudices and traditions keep you from believing the Bible; nor the pride, shame, or love of the world keep you from your seat in the kingdom of heaven, among the royal family of polygamists. Write often and freely.

With sentiments of the deepest affection and kindred feeling, I remain, dear sister, your affectionate sister,

BELINDA MARDEN PRATT.

THE END.

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